

Graduate Research Symposium



December 5, 2024

*Showcasing graduate students' research,
capstone projects and scholarship.*

**Sponsored by the William T. Daly School of General Studies &
Graduate Education and the Graduate Student Council**

Dean's Welcome

Welcome to the Graduate Research Symposium at Stockton University. Tonight, we celebrate the journey and accomplishments of our graduate students who have engaged in research within the past year. Designing and conducting research can be a challenging and rewarding part of this academic journey and tonight signifies the culmination of each person's thesis or other capstone experience. This quest that our graduate students have undertaken could not have been possible without the dedicated assistance of faculty mentors who have shared their own passion, curiosity, and knowledge with these distinguished scholars.

Fall 2024 Symposium presenters include students from five distinct programs: American Studies, Nursing, Occupational Therapy, Data Science & Strategic Analytics, and the Educational Doctorate in Organizational Leadership. Their projects signify their commitments to academic excellence, either through practitioner-based research or archival research, and are achieved through the oral and poster presentations listed within this booklet. We celebrate the diversity and innovativeness of the research presented this evening and promote interdisciplinary research conversations among the campus community. We honor Stockton University's commitment to the research projects presented here tonight.

We are proud of the presenters. We are grateful to all who contributed to the success of this event: our graduate student presenters, dedicated alumni, faculty advisors, program directors, program faculty, deans, staff, friends, family, and all of our special guests. We encourage you to attend the sessions, view the posters, and ask these remarkable scholars about their personal journeys.

Dr. Robert Gregg

Dean, William T. Daly School of General Studies & Graduate Education

Graduate Research Symposium

Campus Center Event Room

December 5, 2024

-AGENDA-

- 4:00 p.m. Welcoming Remarks
Refreshments Served
- 4:15 p.m. Poster & Presentation Session Begins
Doctor of Nursing Practice
Educational Doctorate in Organizational Leadership
Master of Arts in American Studies
Master of Science in Coastal Zone Management
Master of Science in Data Science & Strategic Analytics
Master of Science in Occupational Therapy
- 6:00 p.m. Symposium Closing

The names in this program are those of graduate student presenters as of November 25, 2024.

-Presentations-

Doctor of Nursing Practice

Kristen Wadams

Advisor: Dr. Larider Ruffin & Dr. Shawn Denning | **Digital Poster Presentation #10**

Title: Advanced Care Planning in the Primary Care Setting

Background: Advanced care planning (ACP) is a discussion between a patient and provider to determine the extent of medical treatment desired when a patient is unable to make medical decisions. ACP typically results in the establishment of advanced care directives (ACD), including a healthcare proxy, living will, and Provider Orders for Life-Sustaining Treatment (POLST). The ACP conversation is often delayed until the patient is admitted into the acute care setting. The deferred conversation can greatly impact the patient's plan of care and, secondarily, cause family burden and increased healthcare costs related to unnecessary life-saving medical treatment.

Purpose: The purpose of this project is to determine how an advanced care planning (ACP) education session will affect the providers' ACP referral rates during Medicare Wellness Visits (MWV) in the primary care setting compared to no educational intervention.

Methods: This quality improvement project will assess provider ACP referral rates pre- and post- educational intervention. The investigator will obtain all data through secondary data collection. An appointed medical assistant will send the number of MWV and referral rates by email on a weekly basis for 5 weeks to establish baseline data. A thirty-minute education intervention will take place to review ACP with providers. The medical assistant will collect post-intervention data for 5 weeks to compare to the baseline data.

Keywords: Advanced Care Planning, Advanced Care Directives, Primary Care Practitioners, Medicare Wellness Visits, Education programs, Healthcare Proxy, Living Will, POLST

Karen Lucas MSN, APN, FHRS

Advisor: Dr. Lia Ludan & Dr. Jacqueline Arnone | **Digital Poster Presentation #11**

Title: Transitioning Care for Patients Undergoing Left Atrial Appendage Ligation to a Same Day Discharge Protocol

For patients diagnosed with non-valvular atrial fibrillation, healthcare providers aim to mitigate the risk of ischemic stroke through the implementation of appropriate therapeutic interventions. Oral anticoagulants, including vitamin K antagonists and direct oral anticoagulants, are widely recognized as the standard of care for reducing the risk of stroke. Unfortunately, many patients have contraindications to pharmacologic therapy. Percutaneous left atrial appendage occlusion (LAAO) procedures became an important part of stroke prevention strategies following positive clinical trials, PROTECT AF and PREVAIL, and FDA approval for the Watchman in 2015. Following FDA approval, there has been a growing awareness that LAAO offers stroke prevention benefits and continues to offer an alternative to long-term anticoagulation. Currently, the LAAO procedure carries a high implant success rate and low rate of complications and is widely used in the U.S. Most institutions require an overnight hospital stay to prevent complications. However, for the most part, patients seem to recover from anesthesia within a few hours following their procedure. As a result, a same-day discharge protocol following LAAO procedures has been implemented at a tertiary care hospital. The goal of this EBP project is to ensure the transition from overnight monitoring to same-day discharge is safe and effective without an increase in post discharge complications. This project will include a retrospective analysis of hospital readmission rates at 7 and 45 days, adverse events such as procedural complications and access site complications, and mortality.

PICOT:

Is same-day discharge for patients undergoing left atrial appendage occlusion procedures using the evidence-based same-day discharge protocol as safe as current practice?

Educational Doctorate in Organizational Leadership

Demetrios Roubos

Advisor: Dr. Susan Sweeney | **Table Presentation #5**

Title: Leveling Up Leadership: Leadership & Talent Development in Collegiate Esports

**Funding for this project was provided by Stockton's Distinguished Research Fellowship for Graduate Students*

This instrumental case study seeks to examine the nature of strategic leadership within collegiate esports programs, specifically focusing on the Stockton Esports program as a representative case. The intent of the study is to dissect the components and impact of leadership practices on participant engagement and talent development within this setting. The findings aim to contribute to academic and practical discussions around leadership in esports, potentially guiding the crafting of best practices. These insights will be drawn from the experiences of those involved in the Stockton Esports program and are anticipated to hold relevance for enhancing leadership effectiveness across collegiate esports programs more broadly.

Master of Arts in American Studies

Shannon Griffin

Advisor: Dr. John O'Hara | **Table Presentation #4**

Title: The Harry Reed Archive: An Erotica Collection 1940s-1980s

This presentation will feature a collection of American mid-century magazines, slides, prints and photographic erotica collected by a comicbook store owner from the 1940s through the 1980s. The presentation will explore themes in advertising in erotic magazines, art and literature in erotic magazines, sale of 'art prints' and 'artistic modeling' photographs, sale of erotic film reels, production of erotic photographic slides and two photographs and accompanying letters produced by the subject and sold via correspondence, person to person.

The presentation will also focus on preliminary research for a thesis regarding subject agency in pornography, and the production and sale of "correspondence pornography". Of particular interest is the idea that female subjects producing and selling their own 'correspondence pornography' are catering to the 'male gaze' while cutting out (likely male) commercial intermediaries to sell their products directly to the end users. These types of letters and photographs from 1955 have evolved into modern erotica sold on websites like OnlyFans and Patreon today, which are also often produced and sold by the subjects without corporate commercial intermediaries. This type of production precludes coercion or exploitation, which are of great concern in 'conventional' pornographic production. Connections will be made between these types of photographs and products in America – from the post WW2 era to today. The photos and letters will be placed into context with the rest of the Harry Reed Archive, the history of erotic and pornographic representation, debates about the morality and legality of pornography, the male gaze, and the racial, ethnic, and class dimensions suggested by the material and relationships between subject/purveyor and purchaser.

As this presentation is preliminary research for a thesis project in Spring 2025, criticism, questions, feedback or suggestions regarding additional research and sources are welcomed.

Keywords: Midcentury, Publishing, Erotica, Pornography, Photography

Master of Science in Data Science & Strategic Analytics

Victoria Cusimano

Advisor: Melissa Laurino & Dr. W. Clifton Baldwin | **Poster Presentation #6**

Title: Occurrence and Distribution of the Spotted Lanternfly (*Lycorma delicatula*) in the Northeastern United States Using Citizen Science Data

Spotted lantern flies (*Lycorma delicatula*) are an invasive insect in the Northeastern United States, native to China, Japan, and Vietnam. Spotted lanternflies are considered a planthopper in the Fulgoridae family. The Spotted lanternfly is suspected to have entered the U.S. through a shipment of landscape stone in the egg stage. It was first documented in Berks County, Pennsylvania in 2014. The Spotted lanternfly may feed on 70 different host plants which is what causes the species to be invasive. An invasive species is defined as a species that is non-native to the ecosystem under consideration, and whose introduction causes or is likely to cause economic or environmental harm or harm to human health. This study will analyze the occurrence and distribution of the Spotted lanternfly as reported in iNaturalist, a citizen science platform that uses a crowdsourced species identification system and an organism occurrence recording tool. iNaturalist is a biodiversity observation social networking non-profit organization. Data will be analyzed using various computational methods such as pattern recognition, abstraction, and visualization. Exploring this data will help understand the overall occurrence and distribution of the Spotted lanternfly for preventing the spread of the species and to help prevent further damage to ecosystems in the Northeastern United States.

Daniel Iovino

Advisor: Melissa Laurino & Dr. W. Clifton Baldwin | **Poster Presentation #7**

Title: Occurrence and Distribution of the North Atlantic Humpback Whale (*Megaptera novaeangliae*) off Cape May, New Jersey

Humpback whales, *Megaptera novaeangliae*, follow an extensive staggered migration on both their Northern and Southern migrations along the Northeastern seaboard. Generally, animals will travel North to productive feeding grounds in the summer months, and South towards warmer, tropical breeding grounds for the winter months. Along this migration, the Mid-Atlantic region, specifically Cape May, New Jersey, serves as an important feeding ground for this population throughout the year. A combination of behavioral and environmental data collected by the Cape May Whale Watch and Research Center from 2012 to 2023 was analyzed, across 514 sightings of Humpback whales off of Cape May. Although there was statistical significance shown between environmental factors such as water temperature and depth during recorded sightings, there was only a weak negative correlation present. While factors such as water temperature may influence the start and end of the whales' migration, other influences, such as prey distribution, play a stronger hand in the temporary residency of humpbacks off of Cape May. Preliminary results displayed through R-studio. Examining the presence of animals in this region is essential for tracking ecosystem biodiversity and understanding the impacts natural and anthropogenic threats could have on this species in this region.

Tara Jacobsen

Advisor: Melissa Laurino & Dr. W. Clifton Baldwin | **Poster Presentation #8**

Title: Wrongful Conviction: Mistaken Eyewitness Identification and Race

An exoneree is an individual who has been wrongfully convicted of a crime and later shown to be innocent through the court system. There are several different contributing factors to wrongful convictions, one of the most prevalent being mistaken eyewitness identification (MWID). MWID occurs when an eyewitness to a crime mistakenly identifies someone, later exonerated, as the perpetrator of a crime. Additionally, Black Americans make up a disproportionate amount of American exonerees. This project used data from The National Registry of Exonerations and analyzed 3,578 cases of exonerations from January of 1989 to August of 2024.

This project explored the effect of race on MWID in cases of wrongful convictions and exonerated individuals. Data analysis showed, when filtering for MWID cases, +12.40% (n=642) for Black exonerees and White -14.44% (n=170). Additionally, The Western United States was found to be the only region where another race of exonerees, White, outnumbered Black exonerees. Even in this region, when filtered for MWID cases, Black exonerees outnumber all other races with a difference of +17.45% (n=53). White exonerees showed a difference of -25.93% (n=25) in this region. These results support the hypothesis that mistaken witness identification disproportionality affects certain races.

Keywords: wrongful conviction, eyewitness identification, exoneration, race, criminal justice system

Master of Science in Data Science & Strategic Analytics and Master of Science in Coastal Zone Management

Margvinatta Senesie, M.S. in Data Science & Strategic Analytics

Megan Fielding, M.S. in Coastal Zone Management

Tara Harmer Luke, Professor of Biology

Jacalyn Toth Sullivan, Marine Mammal Research Associate & Adjunct Professor of Marine Science

Advisors: Melissa Laurino & Dr. W. Clifton Baldwin | **Poster Presentation #9**

Title: Monitoring the Diet of Harbor Seals in New Jersey Using Fecal DNA

Harbor Seals (*Phoca vitulina*) play a critical role in the food web of New Jersey's coastal ecosystem. However, little is known about how seasonal changes or wind farm construction may impact their diet. This study investigates the dietary patterns of Harbor Seals in Great Bay, New Jersey, using fecal DNA (fDNA) analysis. By analyzing DNA extracted from scat samples collected between October 2022 and April 2023, we identified the presence of specific fish species consumed by seals.

We used Polymerase Chain Reaction (PCR) to amplify fish DNA, enabling precise species identification through alignment with known local fish. fDNA analysis provided a non-invasive way to study seal diet composition, offering a clearer picture of prey species consumed compared to traditional observational methods. This approach is critical as planned offshore wind farms near Great Bay could disrupt key fish species in the seals' diet.

Analyses revealed significant seasonal and species-level dietary patterns. Frequency analysis identified *Alosa sp.*, *Brevoortia tyrannus*, and *Clupea harengus* as the most consumed species across seasons, with seasonal differences. For example, Atlantic herring (*Clupea harengus*) was prominent in winter months, while species like *Cynoscion sp.* showed a stronger presence in spring. Time-series analyses further confirmed fluctuations in diet composition over time, and co-occurrence heatmaps revealed frequent associations between species such as black drum (*Pogonias cromis*) and Atlantic herring, indicating ecological interdependencies. A t-test demonstrated significant differences in prey frequencies between groups ($p < 0.05$).

These results establish a critical baseline of seal diet composition, helping to monitor ecological shifts driven by environmental changes or human activities. This comprehensive dataset will inform conservation strategies, ensuring sustainable management of Great Bay's marine resources amidst growing environmental challenges.

Master of Science in Occupational Therapy

Victoria Abiva, Emily Klion, Laura Nicolich, Keishla Sanchez

Advisor: Jennifer Calabrese, OTD, MOT, OTR/L | **Poster Presentation #1**

Title: The Contribution of Occupational Therapy to the Quality of Life of Refugees

In this research presentation, we highlighted how occupational therapy may contribute to the quality of life of refugees when they migrate to new countries. There are currently 35.3 million people worldwide displaced from their homes that hold refugee status due to fear of persecution, armed conflict, or natural disasters. Growth in displacement exceeds solutions as there are only 385,000 individuals returning to their homes on a yearly basis compared to 1.5 million in the 1990's. To highlight this issue, we analyzed 15 articles and synthesized the literature to determine the effects of fleeing to another country on a refugee's quality of life and roles in which occupational therapists may help with integrating them into their new community. QOL is defined as an individual's perception of their life, whether it be positive or negative. It takes into consideration the individual's culture, value systems, and personal goals. QOL can be affected by physical health, psychological state, personal beliefs, relationships, and the environment. When pertaining to individuals with refugee status, QOL is often negatively affected by displacement. This can occur due to occupational deprivation, lack of community, trauma, language barriers, and countless other factors. Based on these factors and the common themes found across the articles, we determined that occupational therapists could contribute to the QOL of refugees by advocating for occupational justice, helping them navigate their new environment, and collaborating with them to establish new habits, routines, and roles. This poster presentation sheds light on the need for further research to determine what specific occupational therapy interventions are most effective in regard to increasing QOL of refugees while also considering that migration to a new country may impact individuals in unique ways.

Keywords: occupational therapy, refugees, quality of life, displacement, community

Emily Cioffi, OTS; Briana Harmon, OTS; Sergio Azcona, OTS; Amber Cornish, OTS; Erin Megill, OTS

Advisor: Jennifer Calabrese, OTD, MOT, OTR/L | **Poster Presentation #2**

Title: Trauma-Sensitive Yoga Effects on PTSD Symptoms in Service Women with Military Sexual Trauma

This presentation investigates the role of trauma-sensitive yoga (TSY) in addressing PTSD symptoms as a result of military sexual trauma (MST) in the servicewomen population. MST is a common occurrence among women serving in the US military, contributing to an increased risk of suffering from long-term adverse consequences. PTSD is the most common mental health impact from MST, often co-occurring with other mental health disorders. Trauma-center trauma-sensitive yoga (TCTSY) is a form of yoga specifically designed for survivors of sexual trauma. Trauma-informed yoga (TIY) is a therapeutic technique that integrates mindfulness, breathing, physical activity, and empowerment to encourage survivors to decrease PTSD symptomology, and increase overall well-being. Current intervention-based research supports the utilization of trauma-informed yoga, recognizing the positive impact it has on PTSD symptoms as a result of MST. This presentation aims to educate future and current occupational therapy practitioners on what MST is, how trauma-informed yoga practices can be used as interventions, as well as facilitate further discussions regarding this topic of how advocacy and prevention strategies may be demonstrated.

Keywords: military sexual trauma (MST), trauma-sensitive yoga (TSY), PTSD, servicewomen, trauma-center trauma-sensitive yoga (TCTSY), trauma-informed yoga (TIY), occupational therapy

Katelyn Dalponte, Christina D'Amodio, Sara Lockwood, Ryan Toppi

Advisor: Jennifer Calabrese, OTD, MOT, OTR/L | **Poster Presentation #3**

Title: Effectiveness of Vocational Interventions on Postsecondary Employment in Transition Aged Autistic Youth

Engagement in employment is vital to independent living, financial security and a positive quality of life. However, despite many efforts, the unemployment rate for autistic young adults remains dismal. Occupational therapy plays a pivotal role in transition planning, yet there is limited research on the services provided. This poster aims to evaluate interventions to obtain the skills necessary for the success of transition aged autistic youth in post-secondary employment. Twelve articles discussed vocational interventions regarding employment outcomes, vocational skills and the achievement of a students' transition goals. In all outcomes, improvements were seen, which suggests a positive impact on a students' preparedness for post-secondary employment. However, lack of parental involvement in the transition process was found to result in decreased goal achievement. Further research in the transition process may yield increased preparedness in employment for autistic young adults.



Join Graduate Student Council

The Graduate Student Council (GSC) is an organization of "graduate students who are diverse individuals with unique skills, experiences, and talents. We value this diversity as it enriches our lives and educational experiences. We are committed to our education, our professions, and the advancement of graduate students at the University. We also value the opportunity to meet with fellow graduate students, faculty, administration, and alumni. We desire an organization that is committed, responsive, efficient, and engaging to carry out these desires and to act on our behalf in matters concerning our general welfare."

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