# Statement of Financial Need

For my dissertation, I am assessing our ability to measure cognitive changes due to academic stress. To assess cognition, participants complete one of three computer-based tasks. We measure stress through self-report assessments and salivary cortisol (taken at five timepoints the day after the cognitive task). Participants complete the cognition and stress measures once a week, for three weeks in a row, throughout finals. This will allow us to assess their cognitive performance in a similar timeframe but with varying levels of external stress. We are measuring salivary cortisol along with cognitive performance to have a more objective measure of the participants’ stress responses. Each week, the participants are paid $20 in gift cards, with an additional $20 gift card given to all participants who complete the study (for a total of $80 per participant). There will be three different cognitive tasks, each of which last approximately 1 hour. Tasks will vary between participants and we will analyze the performance variation over the three weeks within-participant. Based on simulation studies of my planned data analysis and modeling approach, I plan to include 5 participants per cognitive task. Thus, my study includes 15 participants, which brings my total spending for gift cards to 3 x 5 x $ 80= $1,200.