

# Xingyu (Shirley) LIU

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## EDUCATION

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| <b>Ph.D, Experimental Psychology, UC San Diego (UCSD)</b>      | 2020-2026 (expected) |
| Advisor: Prof. Craig McKenzie                                  |                      |
| <b>MSc by Research, Psychology, University of Edinburgh</b>    | 2019-2020            |
| Advisors: Profs. René Möttus and Billy Lee                     |                      |
| Distinction in outstanding thesis                              |                      |
| <b>B.A.s, Psychology &amp; French, Pomona College</b>          | 2015- 2019           |
| Advisors: Profs. Sharon Goto, Richard Lewis and Jack Abecassis |                      |
| <i>Cum laude</i> with distinctions in outstanding theses       |                      |

## RESEARCH INTERESTS

**Rational decision-making:** How do normative models of rational decision-making evolve over time? What are good criteria for determining whether a decision is rational?

**Second-order preferences:** What should we do when we have preferences that we wish we didn't have? How do these preference conflicts differ from self-control conflicts?

**Social inferences:** How do people make causal inferences about other's preferences? How do people strategically signal desirable traits about themselves to others?

## FELLOWSHIPS & AWARDS

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| <b>Norman Anderson Travel Grant (Accepted, \$1,949)</b>      | 2026 (accepted) |
| Research travel grant, UCSD Department of Psychology         |                 |
| <b>Summer Graduate Teaching Scholar (\$1,000)</b>            | 2025            |
| UCSD Teaching and Learning Commons                           |                 |
| <b>Katzin Prize (\$10,000/year)</b>                          | 2020-2025       |
| Fellowship for exceptional incoming graduate students, UCSD  |                 |
| <b>Norman Anderson Travel Grant (\$2,754)</b>                | 2025            |
| Research travel grant, UCSD Department of Psychology         |                 |
| <b>Norman Anderson Travel Grant (\$810)</b>                  | 2024            |
| Research travel grant, UCSD Department of Psychology         |                 |
| <b>Norman Anderson Travel Grant (\$1,440)</b>                | 2023            |
| Research travel grant, UCSD Department of Psychology         |                 |
| <b>General IPE PhD Fellowship (\$5,000)</b>                  | 2022            |
| Research fellowship, the Institute of Practical Ethics, UCSD |                 |
| <b>SHORE Fellowship</b>                                      | 2020            |
| Competitive housing fellowship for graduate students at UCSD |                 |

**Rosen Travel Grant (€ 1892)**

2018

Senior thesis research fellowship, Pomona College

**PUBLICATIONS**

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- McKenzie, C. R. M., Sher, S., **Liu, X. S.**, & Kleiman-Lynch, L. J. (2025). When and why framing effects are neither errors nor mistakes. *Mind & Society*.  
<https://doi.org/10.1007/s11299-025-00338-9>
- **Liu X.S.**, & McKenzie, C.R., & Schachner, A.(2025). When default options explain away preferences: a causal reasoning account of mental state reasoning from default options. *Proceedings of the Annual Meeting of the Cognitive Science Society*, 47.  
<https://escholarship.org/uc/item/9bq3d5ch>
- Stewart, R.D., Diaz, A., Hou, X., **Liu, X. S.**, Vainik, U., Johnson, W., & Möttus, R. (2024). The ways of the world? Cross-sample replicability of personality trait-life outcome associations. *Journal of Research in Personality*, 112, 104515.  
<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jrp.2024.104515>
- **Liu, X.S.**, (2021). What motivates us to go on strike? Social and moral norms and their impact on strike participation in individualist and collectivist situations in western cultures. *Journal of European Psychology Students*, 12(1), pp.1–15.  
<http://doi.org/10.5334/jeps.507>

**MANUSCRIPTS**

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- **Liu X.S.**, & McKenzie, C.R., & Schachner, A.(in prep). A generalized causal reasoning account of mental state reasoning from default options.
- McKenzie, C.R., **Liu, X.S.**, Sher, S. (in prep). Who accepts description invariance?
- **Liu X.S.**, McCauley, T., & McCullough, M.E. (in prep). Watch me be self-controlled.
- **Liu, X.S.**, & Möttus, R. (in prep). Happy and in control: exploring cultural differences in the relationship across cultures using IPIP dataset. <https://psyarxiv.com/c7wsd/>
- **Liu, X.S.**, McKenzie, C.R., Winkielman, P., McCullough, M.E. (in prep). Second-order preferences: Origins and implications.
- **Liu, X.S.**, Pilegard, C., McKenzie, C.R., Leong, L. (in prep). Are self-nudges effective?

**CONFERENCE PRESENTATIONS**

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**Talks**

- **Liu, X.S.**, McKenzie, C., & Schachner, A. (Sept 2025). When default options explain away preferences: a causal reasoning account of mental state reasoning from default options. Talk presented at *Subjective Probability Utility and Decision Making (SPUDM)*. Lucca, Italy.
- **Liu X.S.**, McCauley, T., & McCullough, M.E. (June 2025). Watch me be self-controlled.

Talk presented at *Human Behavior and Evolution Society (HBES)*. Atlantic City, NJ, US.

- **Liu, X.S.**, Leong, L., McKenzie, C. & Sher, S. (Aug, 2023). Who accepts description invariance? Talk presented at *Subjective Probability Utility and Decision Making (SPUDM)*. Vienna, Austria.

## Posters

- **Liu, X.S.**, Pilegard, C.; McKenzie, C.R. (Accepted 2025). Self-nudges in the classroom. Poster to be presented at *Society for Judgement and Decision-making (SJDM)*. Denver, Colorado, US
- **Liu, X.S.**, McKenzie, C., & Schachner, A. (July 2025). When Default Options Explain Away Preferences: A Causal Reasoning Account of Mental State Reasoning from Default Options. Poster presented at *Cognitive Science Society (CogSci)*. San Francisco, CA, US
- **Liu X.S.**, McCauley, T., & McCullough, M.E. (May 2024) Watch me be self-controlled. Poster presented at *Human Behavior and Evolution Society (HBES)*. Aarhus, Denmark.
- **Liu, X.S.**, Leong, L., McKenzie, C. & Sher, S. (Nov, 2023). Self-nudging self-control. Poster presented at *Society for Judgement and Decision-making (SJDM)*. San Francisco, CA, US.
- **Liu, X.S.**, Leong, L., McKenzie, C. & Sher, S. (July, 2023). Are self-nudges effective? Poster presented at *Cognitive Science (CogSci)*. Sydney, Australia.
- **Liu, X.S.** & Möttus R. (July, 2022). Happy and in control. Poster presented at *European Conference of Personality (ECP)*. Online.
- **Liu, X.S.**, Leong, L., McKenzie, C. & Sher, S. (Nov, 2021). Who accepts description invariance? Poster presented at *Society for Judgement and Decision-making (SJDM)*. Online.

## TEACHING EXPERIENCES

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### **Instructor of Record, Judgement and Decision Making, UCSD** 2025

- Designed and taught a 5-week course on judgement and decision-making (6hrs/week, 35students)
- Regularly used discussions, live demos, and peer instructions with high participation rates
- Students completed a large-scale writing project with 3 rounds of revisions and feedback

### **Guest Lecturer, Lingnan University** 2023

Lecture on Judgement and Decision-making, invited by Dr. Cheuk Long Chan

### **Graduate Teaching Assistant, UCSD** 2021-present

- Industrial/Organizational Psychology (FA25, FA22)
- Clinical Assessment (SP25)
- Laboratory in Research Methods (WI25, SP24)
- Eating Disorders (FA24)

- Cognitive Psychology (SS24, SP23)
- Developmental Psychology (FA24)
- Creativity (SP22)
- Psychology of Law (FA21)
- Criminology (WI21)

## MENTORING EXPERIENCES

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**Graduate Mentor, Undergraduate Research Assistants, UCSD** 2024 - 2025

Jennifer Lozano, Alan Lopez, John Rodriguez

**Graduate Mentor, Undergraduate Honors Thesis, UCSD** 2024 - 2025

Amy Liu, Daphne Constantino

## PEER REVIEWER

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*Journal of Behavioral and Experimental Economics*

*Journal of Cross-Cultural Psychology*

## MEMBERSHIP IN PROFESSIONAL ORGANIZATIONS

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*Society for Judgement and Decision-making (SJDM)*

*Cognitive Science Society (CogSci)*

*Subjective Probability Utility and Decision Making (SPUDM)*

*Human Behavior and Evolution Society (HBES)*

## ACADEMIC REFERENCES

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|                          |                       |
|--------------------------|-----------------------|
| Prof. Craig McKenzie     | cmckenzie@ucsd.edu    |
| Prof. Michael McCullough | memccullough@ucsd.edu |
| Prof. Adena Schachner    | adschachner@ucsd.edu  |