Julie Abaci

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EDUCATION

The College of New Jersey (TCNJ), Ewing, NJ   08/2020 – 05/2024

Bachelor of Arts in Psychology, Philosophy Minor | GPA: 3.99/4.0

RESEARCH EXPERIENCE

Rutgers University, New Brunswick, NJ   09/2024 – present

Research Coordinator, **Regulation, Action, and Motivated Perception** *(*RAMP**) Lab**

Advisor: Dr. Shana Cole

- Conducting NSF-funded research on political polarization, perceptual and attentional biases in sociopolitical information processing, and collective action.
- Designing visual stimuli and perceptual tasks in Qualtrics to assess whether ideological threats amplify threat perception, potentially driving collective action.
- Collecting and analyzing data using Prolific and SPSS, focusing on between-subjects effects.
- Overseeing lab research assistants, including recruitment, training, orientation, and performance management.
- Managing lab resources, grant budgeting, and overall daily resource allocation.
- Coordinating lab communications, organizing weekly meetings, and ensuring smooth research operations.
- Supporting the design, execution, and administration of all research studies led by Dr. Shana Cole.

Princeton University, Princeton, NJ   06/2023 – 08/2023

Research Fellow, **Princeton Neuroscience Summer Internship Program**

Advisors: Dr. Rachel L Bedder, Dr. Yael Niv

- Identified a gap in the adverse life circumstance literature: inconsistent findings on neural and perceptive reactivity to rewards and losses across socioeconomic status groups.
- Designed a computational task in Python to assess whether uncertainty in early life impacts one's reactivity to rewards and losses in later life.
- Modeled environmental uncertainty and certainty in two critical environments, as well as a post-critical environment comprised of a reinforcement learning task.
- Using the Rescorla-Wagner model for learning, agents' learning rates were optimized in the critical environment and applied to the post-critical environment.
- When analyzing the agents' prediction errors in the post-critical environment, findings indicate that those who undergo uncertain critical periods show greater reactivity to rewards and losses— resulting in enhanced performance on a learning task.

The College of New Jersey (TCNJ), Ewing, NJ

Thesis Student, **Psychology Senior Honors Thesis**   01/2023 – 05/2024

Advisor: Dr. Ashley Borders
Committee Members: Dr. Shaun Wiley, Dr. Adaurennaya Onyewuenyi

- Identified conflicting findings in the collective action literature: collective action participation against sexism results in both positive and negative impacts on well-being across women, primarily as a function of politicized identity and perceived discrimination.
- Analyzed old data sets in the exploratory phase to find consistent patterns across several variables using regression and correlation analyses in SPSS.
- Proposed a novel mediation model wherein politicized identification with feminists mediates the relationship between collective action and positive outcomes, and perceived discrimination mediates the relationship between collective action and negative outcomes.
- To validate my model, I compiled a set of surveys in Qualtrics to measure variables relating to group identification, life satisfaction, anxiety, depression, rumination, and collective action participation.
- Collected data via student recruitment and snowball sampling in fall 2023.
- Used structural equation modeling in MPlus during spring 2024, and both mediation pathways were supported.

Student Researcher, **Senior Independent Research**   01/2024 – 06/2024
Advisor: Dr. John Ruscio

- Developing new software for performing meta-analyses that will be available for a more user-friendly statistical application (the Jamovi project, 2023) and will not have any dependencies on other packages.
- Appropriate statistical and data-visualization techniques will be studied and then coded in R, including fixed- and random-effects models.
- Developing code for the structure and customization of forest plots, funnel plots, and meta-
- analysis result output.
- Will write a tutorial-style paper that describes meta-analytic methods and illustrates all steps in the data-analytic process using the new software.

Student Researcher, **Senior Independent Research**   08/2023 – 12/2023
Advisor: Dr. John Ruscio

- Analyzed literature on bias and noise in decision-making and judgment, with an emphasis on works authored by Dr. Daniel Kahneman, psychologist and economist.
- Organized a conceptual framework wherein hygiene methods for mitigating judgment error are organized into broad categories and linked to applicable sources of bias and noise.
- Worked towards filling a gap in the literature: there currently lacks a comprehensive, accessible framework that classifies types of judgment error, sources of such error, and applicable decision hygiene methods.
- Compiled a research paper synthesizing the literature on past findings and proposing the aforementioned framework.
- The culminating research paper will be shared with Dr. Ruscio's future students as a user-friendly guide to personal improvement in decision-making and heightened understanding of judgment error.

Research Assistant, **Identity Development across the African Diaspora Lab**   08/2023 – 05/2024
Advisor: Dr. Adaurennaya Onyewuenyi

- Analyzed the literature on racial discrimination, well-being, and coping mechanisms such as John Henryism.
- Collaborated with a small group of lab-mates to propose a model wherein John Henryism moderates the relationships between institutional racism, ethnic group membership, and anxiety.
- Motivated by a lack of sufficient research in the literature on John Henryism as a moderator for mental health outcomes, such as anxiety, among Black college students specifically.
- Facilitated a lab discussion on the effects of John Henryism on mental health among Black college students, with an emphasis on xenophobia against one's ethnic background and perceived institutional racism.
- Utilized data from a study completed in a previous semester on the Black student experience at TCNJ, I will run regression and correlation analyses in SPSS to reinforce the moderation model.
- Completed a culminating research paper on our statistical and theoretical findings on coping across Black student populations.

Student Researcher, **Independent Course Project**   03/2023 – 06/2023
Advisor: Dr. Janet Gray

- Pursued an independent project during my enrollment in the Honors Eco-feminism Course.
- Argued in favor of open-access textbook adoption across higher education by discussing the implications for student success and environmental well-being.
- Used published journal articles, books, corporate websites, and peer discussions to gain information on the textbook publishing industry and its harmful impact on low-income, first-generation college students.
- Brainstormed potential solutions to inaccessibility in higher education that are feasible for institutions, beneficial for consumers, and kind to the environment.
- Presented a poster at TCNJ that highlighted open-assess as a partial solution for educational inequity, student health and academic issues, carbon emissions, and deforestation.

Research Assistant, **Clinical Outcomes and Processes Lab**   01/2022 – 12/2022
Advisor: Dr. Ashley Borders

- Collaboratively analyzed literature on the relationship between ruminative thinking in clinical outcomes with lab-mates in weekly meetings.
- Individually compiled a literature review focused on the link between ruminative thinking and the co-occurrence of depression and anxiety symptoms.
- Led a lab discussion on the maladaptive effects of rumination on individuals coping with depression and anxiety, as well as clinical implications for treatment.
- Collected measures to compile into a Qualtrics survey to assess the correlates of rumination, depression, and anxiety.
- Collaborated with lab-mates in the following semester to analyze data from a study on instrumental emotion regulation using SPSS.
- Results indicated that participants used rumination to maintain negative emotions when it was deemed useful to achieve a desired goal.

Student Researcher, **Independent Research**   01/2022 – 05/2022
Advisor: Dr. John Ruscio

- Researched Jonathan Haidt's Moral Foundations Theory and its cross-cultural application.
- Sought to further understand the mechanisms through which individuals make moral judgments and how these differ across environmental contexts.
- Presented personal analyses of literature in weekly discussion meetings with Dr. Ruscio.
- Synthesized ideas to form an outline of the history of moral theory and an overview Moral Foundations Theory.
- Independently managed scheduling and progress in the research and writing process.
- Completed a literature review on the history of moral theory in psychology and philosophy, the novelty of Jonathan Haidt's theory, the theory's components, its cultural implications using Hofstede's cultural dimensions, as well as its application in politics and social class.

BOOK CHAPTERS

Ruscio, J. & **Abaci, J**. (in press). Taking advantage of representative samples of human experience to correct overly dramatic worldviews. In R. J. Sternberg & W. Niu (Eds.), *A multidisciplinary approach to critical thinking.* Palgrave-MacMillan.

PRESENTATIONS & CONFERENCES

Abaci, J. (2024, June). *Alumni Summer Neuroscience Panel*. Invited Panelist for Princeton University's Neuroscience Institute. Princeton, NJ.

Abaci, J. & Ruscio, J. (2024, April). *Package Development for Meta-Analyses in Jamovi.* Oral presentation at TCNJ's annual Celebration of Student Achievement (COSA). Ewing, NJ.

Abaci, J. & Borders, A. (2024, April). *Collective Action's Impact on Well-Being Among Marginalized Group Members.* Oral presentation at TCNJ's annual Celebration of Student Achievement (COSA). Ewing, NJ.

Abaci, J., Bedder R.L., Niv, Y. (2023, November). *A Task-Based Model of Uncertainty's Impact on Reinforcement Learning: A Focus on Socioeconomic Status.* Poster Presented at the annual Society for Neuroscience Faculty for Undergraduate Neuroscience (FUN) poster session. District of Columbia.

Abaci, J., Bedder R.L., Niv, Y. (2023, August). *A Task-Based Model of Uncertainty's Impact on Reinforcement Learning: A Focus on Socioeconomic Status.* Oral presentation at a Niv Lab meeting at Princeton University. Princeton, NJ.

Abaci, J., Bedder R.L., Niv, Y. (2023, July). *A Task-Based Model of Uncertainty's Impact on Reinforcement Learning: A Focus on Socioeconomic Status.* Oral presentation at the annual Leadership Alliance National Symposium Research Conference. Hartford, CT.

Abaci, J. (2023, April). *Freedom & Wealth: Challenging the Libertarian Debate*. Paper presented at Swarthmore College's annual Greater Philadelphia Philosophy Consortium. Swarthmore, PA.

Abaci, J. (2023, April). *Intertwining Personal and Environmental Wellbeing in Textbook Accessibility Reform*. Poster presented at TCNJ's annual Celebration of Student Achievement (COSA). Ewing, NJ.

Abaci, J., Bocco, E., Diana, A., Hairston, K., Manion, C., Mitten, R., Pede, L., Shnaider, A., Villareal, L., Borders, A. (2023, March). *Does Rumination Serve as an Instrumental Emotion Regulation Strategy?* Poster presented at the annual convention of the Eastern Psychological Association. Boston, MA.

HONORS & AWARDS

Princeton Neuroscience Internship Scholarship *(NSF Funded)*	06/2023
TCNJ Humanities & Social Sciences Dean Award, *Senior Honors Thesis Scholarship*	06/2023
Phi Beta Kappa	03/2023
Phi Kappa Phi	03/2023
Phi Sigma Tau: The International Honor Society for Philosophers	11/2023
Psi Chi: The International Honor Society in Psychology	03/2022
TCNJ Honors Program Scholar	08/2020
TCNJ Merit In-State Scholarship	08/2020 – 05/2024
TCNJ Dean's List	12/2020 – 05/2024

EMPLOYMENT

*Sales Associate***, Glitter & Glam**, **Paramus, NJ**   06/2021 – 01/2024
- Served an average of 14 children per day by directing in-store birthday parties and providing individual-care services.
- Fostered positive relationships with children and families by consistently delivering excellent customer service.
- Demonstrated exceptional patience and effective communication to create a welcoming and inclusive environment.
- Recommended and guided customers through services offered via telephone or in person.
- Collaborated with store management to brainstorm improvements to store operations.

The College of New Jersey (TCNJ), Ewing, NJ
Student Worker, **PlayLab Grant Project**   01/2023 – 06/2023
Advisor: Dr. Tabitha Dell'Angelo
- Assisted in developing a newly established Play Lab in TCNJ's School of Education.
- Addressed direct issues of on-campus student mental health—as well as philosophical issues of play deprivation in adulthood—by proposing an open space for play on TCNJ's campus.
- Met and collaborated with Dr. Dell'Angelo and one other student on lab design and development.
- Assisted in budgeting equipment and building within the bounds of grant funds.
- Documented the process and methodology of lab space development for future publication.

- Researched and compiled a literature review on the relationship between childhood development and play.

TEACHING & MENTORING EXPERIENCE

The College of New Jersey (TCNJ), Ewing, NJ

Paid Peer Tutor, **TCNJ Tutoring Center**   08/2023 – 05/2024
Director: Professor Karen Deaver

- Served as a peer tutor for psychology and philosophy courses that I successfully completed.
- Conducted free 30-minute or one-hour sessions to assist students in strengthening their study skills or grasping complex concepts.
- Facilitated writing consultations, offering in-depth feedback on students' written work.
- Provided academic support and guiding students to TCNJ's resources for student success and mental health when needed.

Learning Assistant, **Alcohol Studies Research Seminar**   01/2023 – 05/2023
Advisor: Dr. Margaret Martinetti

- Collaborated with Dr. Martinetti to effectively deliver course content to students enrolled in a research seminar.
- Provided feedback on syllabus and assignment content to optimize class time.
- Reviewed and graded student work on papers, assignments, and discussion posts.
- Held weekly office hours to support and encourage students seeking help.

WORKSHOP ATTENDANCE

Prospective PhD and RA Event in Psychology (PPREP), **Harvard University, MA**   10/2023

- Attended Harvard University's event for prospective PhD students from 10/21/2023 to 10/22/2023.
- Attended panels led by faculty and graduate students discussing the graduate school application process, department and lab culture, and planning for one's academic goals.
- Received individualized feedback on application materials from my paired PPREP mentor, Dr. Mina Cikara.

Yale Graduate School Preview Days (Virtual Event), **Yale University, CT**   11/2/2023

- Attended Yale University's virtual preview event to explore the application process and graduate student experience.
- Received guidance from a faculty panel on strengthening graduate school applications, with an emphasis on personal statement writing.
- Attended a graduate student panel to learn about financial planning, social involvement, and doctoral program exploration.

CERTIFICATIONS & TECHNICAL SKILLS

Collaborative Institutional Training Initiative (CITI) Research Ethics Training

- Human Research – Social & Behavioral Research Investigators

College Reading and Learning Association (CRLA) Training and Evaluation
- Level 2 advanced tutor certification – established professional standards for peer education services.

Data Collection & Analysis
- SPSS
- Jamovi
- Qualtrics
- Excel
- MPlus
- Prolific

Programming Languages
- Python
- R

Languages
- Fluent in English
- Conversant in Turkish

RELEVANT COURSEWORK

Psychology

Methods and Tools of Psychology; Abnormal Psychology; Design and Statistical Analysis; Personality Theory and Research; Development Across the Lifespan; Research Seminar: Alcohol Studies; Sexual & Gender Minority Mental Health; Psychology of Women; Senior Honors Thesis I; Independent Research; Senior Independent Research; Collaborative Research

Other

Human Form and Function; Ethical Theory; Educational Equity & Social Justice in Documentary; Disease and Health in American Society; Issues in Philosophy; History of Modern Philosophy; Conflict & Collaboration; Existentialism; Eco-feminism; Self, God, & Free Will