

Ciara Willett

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EDUCATION

august 2022 | University of Pittsburgh
PhD & MS in Cognitive Psychology,
minor: quantitative methods

2017 | Seton Hall University
MS in Experimental Psychology,
concentration: cognitive neuroscience

2014 | St. Mary's College of Maryland
BA in Psychology,
minor: educational studies

SKILLS / METHODS

Research

Lab / Online Studies
Focus Groups
Survey Design
Prototyping / Wireframing
Contextual Inquiry
Usability Testing
Intervention-Based Research
Science Communication
Participant Recruitment

Data Analysis

A/B Testing
ANOVA
Linear Regression
Logistic Regression
Mixed-Effects Models
Machine Learning

Tools

Qualtrics	Sketch
MTurk	Figma
E-Prime	Tobii eye tracking
R / RStudio	RShiny
Python	SQL
SPSS	neo4j
HTML/CSS	Javascript/jQuery
GitHub	Google App Engine
Twilio	Google Cloud

SUMMARY

I am a trained cognitive psychologist with 8 years of experience in researching human behavior. My work in causal learning & decision making provides me with a unique perspective, particularly for how people process data and learn about new concepts. I'm an adept problem-solver with expertise in quantitative and qualitative methods. I also have extensive experience in front-end & back-end programming.

WORK & RESEARCH EXPERIENCE

Studying Causal Learning over Long Timeframes

2017 - 2021 | **Roles** Lead Researcher, Web Developer

- Built a responsive web application to study how people learn and remember cause-effect relations over weeks.
- Led teams of 8+ undergraduate research assistants in online & in-person recruitment of over 2000 participants across three studies.
- Developed a daily text-message reminder system using Twilio and built scheduling software to maintain large-scale data collection with minimal attrition (2-4%).
- Analyzed large datasets using ANOVAs, A/B tests, & regressions.
- Presented findings at local and national conferences.
- Designed a curriculum to teach undergraduate researchers (without statistical experience) how to conduct statistical analyses in R.

Case Study: Purchasing Internet Online

2020 | **Roles** Researcher, Designer, Data Analyst

- Ran a series of contextual interviews and analyzed the findings using affinity diagrams to identify user wants/needs and pain points when purchasing an internet plan online.
- Selected appropriate design sprint methods to brainstorm novel solutions & conducted speed dating sessions to gain insights.
- Developed a prototype that tested two novel features, using Figma. Conducted usability testing & summarized key findings.

Fostering Resilience and Engagement in Law Students

2022 - now | **Roles** Researcher, Designer, Data Analyst

- Co-led focus groups to gain insights about the first-year experience.
- Conducted A/B testing of online and in-person interventions that encourage first-year law students to adopt an adaptive mindset.
- Designed a mixed-methods survey to assess the effects of the law school's "grading curve" policy. Analyzed participants' open-ended responses & summarized our findings in a report that led to the dissolution of the policy.

RELEVANT COURSEWORK

Design / Research

HCI for Technology Executives
Advanced Research Methods

Advanced Data Analysis

Data Visualization
Data Management
Machine Learning
Mixed Effects Models
Applied Regression Analysis

Human Behavior

Human Skill Acquisition
Decision Science and Policy
Human Cognition and Memory

HONORS & AWARDS

2022 | **Big Idea Blitz, 2nd place**
University of Pittsburgh

2021 | **Graduate Council Award**
Learning, Research &
Development Center at the
University of Pittsburgh

2020 | **Tim Post Award for
Excellence in Research, 2nd place**
Learning, Research &
Development Center at the
University of Pittsburgh

2014 | **St. Mary's Scholar Award
for Academic Performance**
St. Mary's College of Maryland

2014 | **Showcase Project Award
for Undergraduate Thesis**
St. Mary's College of Maryland

SERVICE

2019 - now | **Psychology Equity, Inclusion, and Community (PEIC) Committee** - web developer

2019 - now | **Graduate Student Organization** - representative for Psychology department

2018 - now | **Planned Parenthood of Western Pennsylvania** - volunteer

2019 | **Cognitive Psychology Communications Project** - founding member

2018 | **Cognitive Psychology Program** - student representative

2016 | **TeenTech Workshop for Women in STEM** - volunteer

CLiMate - A Smartphone App to Reduce Climate Anxiety

2022 | **Roles** UX Researcher, Design Lead

- Collaborated with a team of clinical psychologists to develop an app that utilizes therapy techniques to reduce climate anxiety & help users engage in climate action.
- Conducted focus groups with the target market and communicated key insights with stakeholders.
- Designed a pitch deck for the "Big Idea Blitz" competition at the University of Pittsburgh; our team won 2nd place!

Teaching "Why Correlation Doesn't Imply Causation"

2021 - now | **Roles** Lead Researcher, Designer, Data Analyst

- Designed and tested three methods of teaching students how to use causal diagrams to illustrate alternative explanations for a correlation in an observational study.
- Used insights from results and participant feedback to make iterative changes & improve performance.
- Mentored undergraduate research assistants in research methods and qualitative coding techniques.

Teaching Fellow

2019 - now | **Course** Research Methods in Psychology

- Primary instructor for course sections with 90+ undergraduate psychology students.
- Deliver engaging online & in-person lectures about foundational principles of research.
- Develop homework assignments to encourage deeper understanding of the material & designed assessments to evaluate students' knowledge and progress in the course.
- Designed an RShiny application to help students visualize when they should control for third variables in a regression.
- Mentored undergraduate teaching assistants.

chef brett bankson - personal website (bbbankson.github.io)

2021 | **Roles** Design Lead, Web Developer

- Met with client to discuss goals for business and understand their position within the food industry space.
- Used Sketch to present different design options and incorporated client feedback into final design.
- Coded website using HTML/CSS, & javascript.