Ciara **Willett**

ciarawillett@pitt.edu • www.ciara-willett.com • linkedin.com/in/ciara-willett

EDUCATION

University of Pittsburgh • 2022
PhD & **MS** in Cognitive Psychology,
minor: quantitative methods

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

St. Mary's College of Maryland • 2014
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
Methods
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

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

Teaching "Why Correlation Doesn't Imply Causation"

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

- 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.

Fostering Resilience and Engagement in Law Students

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

- Co-led focus groups to gain insights about law students' experiences in their first year.
- Conducted A/B testing of online and in-person interventions that encourage 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.

Case Study: Purchasing Internet Online

Roles Researcher, Designer, Data Analyst | *Oct - Dec 2020*

- 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 get quick feedback from target customers.
- Designed a prototype that tested two novel features, using Figma. Conducted usability testing & summarized key findings.

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
Decision Science and Policy
Human Skill Acquisition
Human Cognition and Memory

HONORS & AWARDS

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

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

**Tim Post Award for Excellence in
Research, 2nd place** | 2021
Learning, Research &
Development Center at the
University of Pittsburgh

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

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

Teaching Fellow

Course Research Methods in Psychology | *2019 - now*

- 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 & assessments to evaluate students' knowledge.
- Designed an RShiny application to help students visualize when they should control for third variables in a regression.
- Mentored undergraduate teaching assistants.

CliMate - A Smartphone App to Reduce Climate Anxiety

Roles UX Researcher, Design Lead | *2022*

- 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!

Studying Causal Learning over Long Timeframes

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

- Built a responsive web application (& scheduling software) to study how people learn cause-effect relations over weeks.
- Led teams of 8+ undergraduate research assistants in recruitment (2000+ participants) & data collection.
- Designed and implemented a curriculum in R to teach undergraduate researchers (without statistical experience) how to analyze the data they collected.
- Analyzed large datasets using ANOVAs, t-tests, & regressions.