

# Eliany Perez

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<https://elianyperez.com/>

<https://scannlab.psych.ufl.edu/graduate-students/>

University of Florida

Department of Psychology

945 Center Dr | Gainesville, FL 32610

## RESEARCH INTERESTS

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- |                            |                                |
|----------------------------|--------------------------------|
| ✦ Decision making          | ✦ Risk tolerance               |
| ✦ Explore-exploit tradeoff | ✦ fMRI                         |
| ✦ Spatial cognition        | ✦ Healthy and vulnerable aging |
| ✦ Cognition                | ✦ Computational modeling       |

## EDUCATION

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### PhD in Psychology

*In progress*

**Program:** Behavioral and Cognitive Neuroscience

**Mentor:** Steven M. Weisberg, PhD

### MS in Psychology

*April 2023*

**Program:** Behavioral and Cognitive Neuroscience

**Thesis:** "The role of risk tolerance in navigation strategy decisions" ([Read here](#))

**Mentor:** Steven M. Weisberg, PhD

### Bachelor of Science in Psychology

*April 2017*

University of Florida, Gainesville, Florida

### Bachelor of Arts in Anthropology

*April 2017*

University of Florida, Gainesville, Florida

## GRANTS

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**Pilot Research Grant:** Scientific Research Network on  
Decision Neuroscience and Aging (SRNDNA) (NIH 1R24AG076847-01)

Spring 2024- Fall 2024

**Project Title:** *Exploring Risk Tolerance and Decision-Making Across Contexts:  
Implications for Healthy Cognitive Aging and Alzheimer's Disease*

**PI:** Eliany Perez, MS

**Co-PI:** Steven M. Weisberg, PhD

**Total Award:** \$24,000

## FELLOWSHIPS, HONORS, AND AWARDS

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**National Institute on Aging Research Training in Non-Pharmacological  
Interventions for Cognition in Aging, MCI, and Alzheimer's Disease**

*Fall 2023 - Present*

*(\$27,000 stipend plus tuition waiver, travel, and research expenses)*

<b>J. Frank Yates Student Conference Award (\$1,000)</b>	<i>Fall 2023</i>
<b>Gerber Behavioral and Cognitive Neuroscience Psychology Research Award (\$1,000)</b> <i>Outstanding merit in contributing to the area of Behavioral and Cognitive Neuroscience Department of Psychology, University of Florida</i>	<i>Spring 2023</i>
<b>O. Ruth McQuown Graduate Award (\$7,000)</b>	<i>Fall 2023</i>
<b>2023 Levitt Award for Student Research on Aging (\$50 poster acceptance)</b>	<i>Spring 2023</i>
<b>Jacquelin Goldman Research Award (\$6,000)</b>	<i>Spring 2023</i>
<b>Sallie P. Asche Conference Travel Award (\$500)</b> <i>Dallas Aging and Cognition Conference (DACC)</i>	<i>Spring 2023</i>
<b>CLAS Graduate Student Travel Award (\$300)</b> <i>Interdisciplinary Navigation Symposium (iNAV)</i>	<i>Summer 2022</i>
<b>Jacquelin Goldman Research award (\$6,000)</b>	<i>Spring 2021</i>
<b>Department of Psychology travel awards (\$2,925)</b> <i>Five Travel awards for conference presentations</i>	<i>Spring 2021- Fall 2023</i>
<b>Diversity Enhancement Award (\$5,000)</b>	<i>2020-Present</i>
<b>Conference travel award (\$2,500)</b> <i>Scientific Research Network on Decision Neuroscience &amp; Aging (SRNDNA)</i>	<i>Spring 2020</i>

## PROFESSIONAL APPOINTMENTS AND RESEARCH EXPERIENCE

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<b>Ph.D Candidate</b> <b>Advisor:</b> Steven M. Weisberg, Ph.D <i>Spatial Cognition and Navigational Neuroscience Lab University of Florida, Gainesville, FL</i>	<i>2020-Present</i>
<b>Predoctoral Fellow</b> <b>Mentor:</b> Steven Weisberg, Ph.D <b>Co-mentor:</b> Natalie C. Ebner, Ph.D <b>Director:</b> Michael Marsiske, PhD National Institute on Aging T32 Fellowship on non-Pharmacological Interventions for Cognition in Aging, MCI, and Alzheimer's Disease (T32 AG020499)	<i>2023-Present</i>
<b>Lab Manager &amp; Study Coordinator</b> <i>Social Cognitive and Affective Development Lab University of Florida, Gainesville, FL Lab Principal Investigator: Natalie Ebner, Ph.D</i>	<i>2017-2020</i>
<b>Postbaccalaureate</b> <i>Brain Cognition and Development Lab</i>	<i>2019-2020</i>

University of Florida, Gainesville, FL  
Lab Principal Investigator: Lisa Scott, Ph.D

### Postbaccalaureate

2019-2020

Center for the Study of Emotion and Attention (CSEA)  
University of Florida, Gainesville, FL  
Lab Principal Investigator: Andreas Keil, Ph.D

### Case Management Intern

2016-2017

Child Advocacy Center  
Gainesville, USA

### Volunteer

2015-2016

Child Advocacy Center  
Gainesville, USA

### Volunteer (Pediatrics Department)

2014-2017

UF Health Shands Hospital  
Gainesville, USA

## PUBLICATIONS

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\*indicates undergraduate student advisee

**Perez, E.**, Shoenfelt, A., Lighthall, N. R., Frazier, I., El-Shafie, D., Lin, T., Ebner, N. C. (2023). The Social Iowa Gambling Task (S-IGT): A Novel Paradigm for Investigating Social Learning and Decision Making. *PsyArXiv*. ([Read here](#))

Horta, M., Shoenfelt, A., Lighthall, N., **Perez, E.**, Frazier, I., Heemskerk, A., Lin, T., Wilson, R., & Ebner, N. C. (2024). Age-group differences in trust-related decision-making and learning. *Sci Rep* **14**, 68 (2024). ([Read here](#))

**Perez, E.**, & Weisberg, S. M. (2023). Individual differences in spatial navigation. In Reference Module in Neuroscience and Biobehavioral Psychology. *Elsevier*. ([Read here](#))

**Perez, E.**, Kvam, P.D., McKemey, R.\*, & Weisberg, S.M. (Stage 1 RR in principle acceptance). The role of risk tolerance in navigation strategy decisions.

Pehlivanoglu, D., Lighthall, N. R., Lin, T., Chi, K., Polk, R., **Perez, E.**, Cahill, B. S., & Ebner, N. C. (2022). Aging in an "infodemic": The role of analytical reasoning, affect, and news consumption frequency on news veracity detection. *Journal of Experimental Psychology: Applied*. ([Read here](#))

Valdés-Hernández, P.A., Polk, R., Horta, M., Frazier, I., **Perez, E.**, Ojeda, M., Porges, E., Cruz-Almeida, Y., Feifel, D., Ebner, N.C. (2021). Chronic oxytocin administration in older men modulates functional connectivity during animacy perception. *Aging Brain*. ([Read here](#))

Rung, J.M., Horta, M., Tammi, E.M., **Perez, E.**, Ojeda, M., Lin, T., Harris, G., Somerville, J., Salmeron, D., Sandesara, B., Feifel, D., Ebner, N.C. (2021). Safety and side effects of chronic intranasal oxytocin in older men. *Psychopharmacology*. ([Read here](#))

Frazier, I., Lighthall, N. R., Horta, M., **Perez, E.**, & Ebner, N.C. (2019). CISDA: Changes in integration for social decisions in aging. *WIREs Cognitive Science*. ([Read here](#))

- Lin, T., Liu, G.A., **Perez, E.**, Rainer, R., Febo, M., Cruz-Almeida, Y., & Ebner, N. C. (2018). Systemic inflammation mediates age-related cognitive deficits [Research topic] *Frontiers in Aging Neuroscience*. ([Read here](#))
- Oliveira, D., Lin, T., Rahman, M., Akefirad, R., Ellis, D., **Perez, E.**, Bobhate, R., DeLong, L., Cappos, J., Brun, Y., Ebner, N. C. (2018). API Blindspots: Why experienced developers write vulnerable code. *SOUPS'18: Symposium on Usable Privacy and Security*. ([Read here](#))

## MEDIA APPEARANCES

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- Perez E.**, Shoenfelt A., Horta M., Ebner NC., Lighthall NR. (2024, January 22). Facing wolves in sheep's clothing: How younger and older adults differ in trust-related decision-making and learning. *Behind the Paper by Springer Nature*. ([Read here](#))
- UF neuroscience students engage public schools in Brain Awareness Week activities» Department of Neuroscience » College of Medicine » University of Florida. (2021). Retrieved January 22, 2024, from ([Read here](#))
- Interview in Home Magazine. *Fulfilling Needs, Building Communities*. (2017, January). HOME: Living in Greater Gainesville. ([Read here](#))

## CONFERENCE PRESENTATIONS

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\*indicates undergraduate student advisee

- \*Kunath, J., Barnas, A. J., **Perez, E.**, Boogaart, Z., Ebner, N. C., & Weisberg, S. M. (November 2023). *Modifying spatial navigation strategy through task instruction in younger and older adults*. 64th Annual Meeting of the Psychonomic Society. San Francisco, CA.
- Perez, E.**, Kvam, P., Weisberg, S. M. (November 2023). *The role of risk tolerance in navigation strategy decisions*. 64th Annual Meeting of the Psychonomic Society. San Francisco, CA, USA.
- Perez, E.**, Kvam, P., Weisberg, S. M. (April 2023). *The role of risk tolerance in navigation strategy decisions*. Scientific Research Network on Decision Neuroscience & Aging, Santa Barbara, CA, USA.
- Horta, M., Shoenfelt, A., Lighthall, N., **Perez, E.**, Frazier, I., Heemskerk, A., Lin, T., Wilson, R., & Ebner, N. C. (April 2023). *Facing Trustworthiness: Age-group Differences in Trust-related Decision-making and Learning*. Scientific Research Network on Decision Neuroscience & Aging, Santa Barbara, CA, USA.
- El-Shafie, D., Polk, R. J., Horta, M., **Perez, E.**, Heemskerk, A., Lin, T., Feifel, D., Ebner, N.C. (April 2023). *Chronic intranasal oxytocin administration increases positive mood and ability to repair mood in older adults*. Scientific Research Network on Decision Neuroscience & Aging, Santa Barbara, CA, USA.
- Polk, R. J., Horta, M., **Perez, E.**, Heemskerk, A., Lin, T., Feifel, D., Ebner, N.C. (March 2023). *Chronic intranasal oxytocin administration increases positive mood and ability to repair mood in older adults*. Poster presented at the Thirteenth Annual Institute for Learning in Retirement Student Research on Aging Poster Competition and the Robert Levitt Awards at Oak Hammock, Gainesville, FL.
- \*Kunath, J., **Perez, E.**, Barnas, A. J., Boogaart, Z., Ebner, N. C., & Weisberg, S. M. (March 2023). *Neural correlates of strategy shifts in navigation behavior*. Poster presentation. The Thirteenth Annual Institute for

Learning in Retirement Student Research on Aging Poster Competition and the Robert Levitt Awards at Oak Hammock, Gainesville, FL.

**Perez, E.,** Kunath, J., Barnas, A. J., Boogaart, Z., Ebner, N. C., & Weisberg, S. M. (February 2023). *Neural correlates of strategy shifts in navigation behavior*. Poster presentation. Dallas Aging and Cognition Conference, Dallas, TX, USA.

**Perez, E.,** Kunath, J., Barnas, A. J., Boogaart, Z., Ebner, N. C., & Weisberg, S. M. (June 2022). *Neural correlates of strategy shifts in navigation behavior*. Poster presentation. Interdisciplinary Navigation Symposium (virtual).

**Perez, E.,** Kunath, J., Barnas, A. J., Boogaart, Z., Ebner, N. C., & Weisberg, S. M. (May 2022). *Neural correlates of strategy shifts in navigation behavior*. Data Blitz. Florida Consortium on the Neurobiology of Cognition, Tallahassee, FL, USA.

Pehlivanoglu, D., Lin, T., Chi, K., **Perez, E.,** Polk, R., Cahill, B. S., Lighthall, N. R., & Ebner, N. C. (August 2021). *Aging in an "Infodemic": Susceptibility to Fake News During COVID-19*. Poster presentation. The American Psychological Association Annual Convention (virtual).

**Perez, E.** & Weisberg, S.M. (March 2021). *The road less traveled: Neural and behavioral correlations between risk-taking and spatial navigation strategy choice*. Poster presentation. Cognitive Neuroscience (virtual).

Frazier, I., Lighthall, N., **Perez, E.,** Ebner, N.C. (April 2020). *Face forward: Age differences in decisions to trust during a social version of the Iowa Gambling Task*. Cognitive Aging Conference, Atlanta, GA, USA.

**Perez, E.,** Lighthall, N., Frazier, I., Ebner, N.C. (March 2020). *Face forward: Age differences in decisions to trust during a social version of the Iowa Gambling Task*. Oral presentation. Scientific Research Network on Decision Neuroscience & Aging, Honolulu, Hawaii, USA.

Valdes-Hernandez, P.A., Horta, M., Frazier, I., Porges, E.C., Polk, R., **Perez, E.,** Ojeda, M., CruzAlmeida, Y., Morris, J.P., Feifel, D., & Ebner, N. C. (October 2019). Chronic oxytocin administration in older men modulates functional connectivity of the posterior superior temporal sulcus during social perception. Nanosymposium Oral Presentation. Society for Neuroscience, Chicago, Illinois.

**Perez, E.,** Månsson, K. N. T., Lin, T., Lussier, D., Horta, M., Frazier, I., Liu, P., Weir, D., Feifel, D., Fischer, H., Ebner, N. C. (June, 2019). *Neuroplasticity and Cognitive Benefits Associated with Chronic Intranasal Oxytocin in Aging*. Poster presentation. Institute on Aging Day, Gainesville, FL, USA.

Lussier, D., Hayes, R., Horta, M., Lin, T., Frazier, I., Weir, D., **Perez, E.,** Feifel, D., Månsson, K. N. T., Fischer, H., & Ebner, N. C. (June, 2018). *Four-week intranasal oxytocin vs placebo administration modulation of amygdala and accumbens volume*. Poster presentation. Annual Meeting of the Organization for Human Brain Mapping, Singapore.

Liu, G. A., Lin, T., Rainer, R., **Perez, E.,** Burns, P., Anton, S. D., Febo, M., Cruz-Almeida, Y. & Ebner, N. C. (May, 2018). *Systemic inflammation mediates age-related cognitive decline*. Poster presentation. Cognitive Aging Conference, Atlanta, GA, USA.

Liu, G. A., Lin, T., Rainer, R., **Perez, E.,** Burns, P., Anton, S. D., Febo, M., Cruz-Almeida, Y., & Ebner, N. C. (March, 2018). *Systemic inflammation mediates age-related cognitive decline*. Poster

presentation. The 8th Annual North Central Florida Chapter of the Society for Neuroscience Conference, Gainesville, FL, USA.

Rahman, M. S., Lin, T., Akefirad, R., Ellis, D., **Perez, E.**, Delong, L. A., Cappos, J., Brun, Y., & Ebner, N. C., & Oliveira, D. (March, 2018). *API blindspots: Why experienced developers write vulnerable code*. Poster presentation. 2018 FICS Conference on Cybersecurity, Gainesville, FL, USA.

Liu, G. A., Lin, T., Rainer, R., **Perez, E.**, Burns, P., Anton, S. D., Febo, M., Cruz-Almeida, Y., & Ebner, N. C. (February 2018). *Systemic inflammation mediates age-related cognitive decline*. Poster presentation. ILR Student Research on Aging Exposition, Gainesville, FL, USA.

## CONFERENCE ATTENDANCE

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<i>Latinos and Alzheimer's Symposium</i>	<i>April 25-26, 2022</i>
<i>Cognitive Neuroscience Society (CNS)</i>	<i>Mar 13-16, 2021</i>
<i>iNAV Interdisciplinary Navigation Symposium</i>	<i>Oct 5-7, 2020</i>
<i>Scientific Research Network on Decision Neuroscience &amp; Aging (SRNDNA)</i>	<i>Mar 8-9, 2020</i>

## ADDITIONAL TRAINING AND WORKSHOP ATTENDANCE

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<b>NVIDIA Fundamentals of Deep Learning</b> University of Florida, Gainesville, FL Instructed by the ColorStack UF team	<i>Spring, 2024</i>
<b>Dynamic Models of Decision-Making</b> University of Florida, Gainesville, FL Instructed by Dr. Peter Kvam	<i>Fall, 2022</i>
<b>Neuromatch Academy 2021: Summer School in Computational Neuroscience</b>	<i>Summer, 2021</i>
<b>Bayesian Statistics Workshop</b> University of Florida, Gainesville, FL Instructed by Dr. Peter Kvam	<i>Summer, 2020</i>
<b>Neurohackademy 2020: Summer School in Neuroimaging and Data Science</b>	<i>Summer, 2020</i>
<b>Mini ERP Boot Camp</b> <i>McKnight Brain Institute of the University of Florida</i> Instructed by Dr. Emily Kappenman	<i>Fall, 2018</i>

## TEACHING EXPERIENCE

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<b>Guest Lecturer</b> University of Florida, Department of Psychology Lecture: "Executive Function with a focus on Decision Making" Instructor: Steven M. Weisberg, PhD Course: Introduction to Cognitive Neuroscience (PSB4342)	<i>Spring 2023</i>
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### **Graduate Teaching Assistant**

University of Florida, Department of Psychology  
Advisor: Steven M. Weisberg, PhD  
Course: Introduction to Cognitive Neuroscience (PSB4342)

*Spring 2023*

### **Graduate Teaching Assistant**

University of Florida, Department of Psychology  
Advisor: Lori Knackstedt, PhD  
Course: Behavioral Neuroscience

*Fall 2022*

### **Graduate Teaching Assistant**

University of Florida, Department of Psychology  
Advisor: Neil Rowland, PhD  
Course: Psychology of Learning and Memory

*Spring 2021*

### **Graduate Teaching Assistant**

University of Florida, Department of Psychology  
Advisor: Brian Cahill, PhD  
Course: Cognitive Psychology

*Fall 2021*

### **Mentorship**

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**Mentee:** Merrill Garlington

University of Florida

**Program:** University Scholars

**Project:** Structural neural correlates of spatial navigation behavior in older adults: A hippocampal subfield analysis

**PI:** Steven M. Weisberg, PhD

### ***Undergraduate students and post bacs directly supervised:***

Madison Dobreff, Brandi Reynolds, Gerrica Lamothe, Jeffrey Kunath, Merrill Garlington, Lachyn Almazova, Cecelia Albright, Yukshi Jain

### **Professional Affiliations**

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SPARK Society

Scientific Research Network on Decision Neuroscience & Aging

Society for Neuroscience

Association for Psychological Science

### **Service**

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#### **Mentored Journal Reviews**

*Journal of Neuroscience*

*2021*

*Neuropsychologia*

*2023*

#### **Professional Service**

**Jacquelin Goldman and Trish Ring Developmental Colloquium Speaker Series**

*January 17-19, 2024*

*Lead Graduate Organizer*

**Speaker:** Dr. Derek Isaakowitz

**Machen Florida Opportunity Scholars Graduate School Panel**

February 24<sup>th</sup>, 2022

*Invited Panelist*

Provided insight and advice about graduate school to first generation undergraduate students.

**North Central Florida Society for Neuroscience Chapter**

Fall 2021 - Spring 2022

*Brain Awareness Week Chair*

**North Central Florida Society for Neuroscience Conference**

January 28, 2022

*Volunteer*

**North Central Florida Society for Neuroscience Chapter**

Fall 2020 - Spring 2021

*Brain Awareness Week Vice Chair*

**Diversity Week: Health and Medicine Symposium**

April 8, 2021

*Judge*

**North Central Florida Society for Neuroscience Conference**

February 19, 2021

*Moderator*

**Skills**

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**Methodological and analysis training**

- ✦ fMRI
- ✦ EEG/ERP
- ✦ Eye tracking

**Statistical packages**

- ✦ R/R Studio
- ✦ Jasp
- ✦ Jamovi

**Computational experience**

Coding languages:

- ✦ R/Rstudio
- ✦ Bash shell scripting
- ✦ MATLAB
- ✦ Python

Analysis software:

- ✦ PsychoPy
- ✦ EEGLAB
- ✦ EMEGS
- ✦ ERPLAB
- ✦ FSL
- ✦ fMRIPrep
- ✦ Conn
- ✦ MRIQC
- ✦ Freesurfer

Data management:

- ✦ R/Rstudio
- ✦ HPC
- ✦ Jupyter Lab/Jupyter notebook
- ✦ MobaXterm

**Experimental environments and cognitive testing experience**

Physical and cognitive measure administration:

- ✦ Audio Editing and analysis (Audacity)
- ✦ California Verbal Learning Test (CVLT)
- ✦ FrACT, NIH toolbox
- ✦ TICS
- ✦ Test for Auditory Processing Disorders (SCAN-3)

- ✦ Qualtrics
- ✦ RedCap

**Languages**

- ✦ English (fluent)
- ✦ Spanish (fluent)
- ✦ French (basic)

Questionnaire creation and administration: