

# MIKAH NELSON

Email: [mikah@ucsb.edu](mailto:mikah@ucsb.edu) / mikah [at] ucsb [dot] edu

## EDUCATION

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2020 – 2024      B.S. in Psychological and Brain Sciences  
 University of California, Santa Barbara (UCSB), Goleta, CA  
 GPA: 3.58  
 Member: Psi Chi, Santa Barbara Creative Lab

## PUBLICATIONS & POSTERS

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\* indicates first authors.

### Conference Publications

Utom, C.\*, Liedtke Lundstedt, J., Belinfante, J., **Nelson, M.**, Woodman, K.\*, & Weber, R.\* (2023). Unraveling the ties between problematic social media use, emotion regulation, and psychological well-being. *International Communication Division*.

### Posters

**Nelson, M.\***, Youk, S., Malik, M., Liedtke Lundstedt, J., Belinfante, J., Utom, C., Woodman K., & Weber, R.\* (2023). Expressing collective spatial communication in goal-orientated virtual worlds. [Research Proposal Poster]. *Association for Psychological Science*.

Belinfante, J.\*, Lundstedt, J. L., Utom, C., **Nelson, M.**, Woodman, K., & Weber, R.\* (2024). Education and political sophistication positively moderate the relationship between openness to experience and conservatism. [Research Proposal Poster]. *Association for Psychological Science*.

Liedtke Lundstedt, J.\*, Utom, C., Belinfante, J., **Nelson, M.**, Woodman, K., & Weber, R.\* (2024). Exploring the resting-state functional connectivity of problematic social media use. [Research Proposal Poster]. *Association for Psychological Science*.

Munns, M.\*, **Nelson, M.\***, He, C., Chrastil E., & Hegarty, M.\* (2023). Everyday spatial experience, video games, and their influence on spatial abilities. *Psychonomics Society Conference*.

Utom, C.\*, Liedtke Lundstedt, J., Belinfante, J., **Nelson M.**, Woodman, K.\*, & Weber, R.\* (2023). Unraveling the ties between problematic social media use, emotion regulation, and psychological well-being. *International Communication Division*.

## RESEARCH EXPERIENCE

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March 2022 - Present      **Research Assistant, Honors Thesis Student**  
 Social Cognitive Development Lab  
 PI: Dr Zoe Liberman; Graduate Mentor: Elizabeth Quinn-Jensen, University of California, Santa Barbara

- Honors Thesis: “Children’s Perceptions Regarding Biracial Identity.” [Working title]
- Responsible for helping recruit, schedule, run, code, design, and analyze studies with infants

and children

- Collects data through UCSB's scientific outreach with local science museum and zoo and analyzes quantitative and qualitative data using R
- Codes videotaped interactions, preferential looking times, and written responses for behaviors in developmental studies

April 2023 -  
Present

**Research Assistant**

Media and Neuroscience Lab

PI: Dr. Rene Weber, University of California, Santa Barbara

- Enacts study procedures to investigate media and the moral brain
- Cleans, codes and analyzes survey data from Qualtrics using Excel and Rstudio
- Schedules and screens participants for and in fMRI appointments
- Examines fMRI and eye tracking data from scans to minimize technical errors
- Modifies Python script for 3D printing program for fMRI scans to create 3D models of participant brain scans

October 2022 -  
Present

**Co-Lab Manager and Research Associate**

Spatial Thinking Lab

PI: Dr. Mary Hegarty, University of California, Santa Barbara

- Schedules participants for a collaborative UC study, pays subjects and follows IRB requirements, tracks funding for research projects, organizes lab meetings
- Researches spatial cognition, resulting in co-authorship on a poster investigating the effect daily spatial experience has on performance on spatial tasks
- Leverages R markdown to contribute to a reproducible data analysis report for coding mental rotation task for larger grant project
- Conducts statistical analyses using R and RStudio for part of the project examining spatial activities
- Acts as experimenter and researcher running participants in Virtual Reality and Omni-directional VR, PsychoPy and Unity applications on spatial cognition tasks

June 2022 -  
January 2023

**Research Assistant**

Affective Psychophysiology Lab

PI: Dr. Sylvia Kreibig, Dr. James Gross, Stanford University

- Scored data and organized files on heart rate variability data (ECGs) using Kubios HRV Premium for a sleep study regarding sleep bruxism and its effects on emotion on participants
- Conducted literature reviews on loose and tight coupling in systems, and psychophysiological measures and their standardization in the field

## RESEARCH INTERESTS

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- **Spatial experiences and cognition**
- **Concepts and categorization**
- **Learning and cognitive processes**

## AWARDS AND HONORS

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December 2023

Undergraduate Research & Creative Activities Grant (URCA) (\$750)  
University of California, Santa Barbara

August 2023-  
September 2023      Summer Research Experience for Undergraduates NSF (\$3,200)  
University of California, Santa Barbara  
Faculty Advisor: Mary Hegarty

March 2023              Small Undergraduate Research Grants FRAP (\$700)  
University of California, Santa Barbara

Winter 2021,  
Spring 2022 & 2023    Dean's Honors List, University of California, Santa Barbara

## **SKILLS**

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**Coding**              R for statistical computing (descriptive statistics,  
correlations, t-tests, ANOVAs, regressions, agent-based modeling)  
Python  
Javascript, p5.js  
HTML/CSS