

2023 - 2024

Palo Alto University

Inclusive Excellence Symposium

Wednesday, April 24 | 1 PM - 4 PM (PST)

Online via Zoom

Schedule of Events

1:00 pm - 1:15 pm
Main Zoom Room

Welcome Remarks
President Maureen O'Connor
Provost Erika Cameron

1:15pm - 2:00pm Concurrent Session 1

Room 1

Menstrual Dignity on Campus

Presenters

Charlotte Beard, PhD and Alexandra Rousseau, MD, MS

Description

The Innovation lab presents a topic on menstrual dignity on campus by sharing the results of a recent health initiative. The Palo Alto University Positive Period and Plumbing Project aimed to build more inclusive communities by reducing stigma related to menstruation and increasing equity for individuals who menstruate. Researchers also aimed to address an ongoing need within facilities management related to plumbing issues. The project used a behavioral design paradigm and an interrupted time-series research design to make modifications to campus restrooms. Students' beliefs and perceptions about the project were collected and will be shared. In all, the project provided students with 1,216 menstrual products. Student impressions about the project were collected through a survey that was open after the completion of the project and analyzed using quantitative and qualitative measures. Most students who responded to the survey had a menstrual cycle during the course of the project (94.4%). Student responses to aims of the study will be shared, with recommendations for continued implementation and improvement.

Room 2

Teaching Equitable Couples Counseling Practice

Presenters

Susan Branco, PhD, Mackenzie Atchie, and Emma Sower

Description

Counselor educators are challenged to develop and implement creative ways to teach couple counseling theory and skills (Williams et al., 2021). One strategy includes the application of reflecting teams and couple counseling skills practice. Reflecting teams in counselor education facilitate student participation and engagement by offering live observation and feedback to co-counselors conducting a couples counseling session (Landis & Young, 1994). The couples counseling teaching team, including the couples counseling course lead (CL) faculty member and two doctoral-level psychology teaching assistants (TAs), aimed to adapt Shurts et al.'s (2006) role-play and reflecting team couples counseling teaching model to an online classroom.

The team reviewed relevant couples counseling andragogy to prepare for the adapted reflecting team experience. The TAs would portray the identified couple, with whom the students in the course would co-counsel throughout the term. They created a composite queer and women-identifying couple, "Andi" and "Jo," who experienced mental health and financial stressors to allow for socioculturally attuned (Knudson & Kim, 2022) counseling opportunities.

	<p>At the beginning of the term, the CL described the reflecting team model and assigned students peer-reviewed literature on student emotional experiences while participating in a similar reflecting and co-counseling team activity in a couples counseling course (Harrawood et al., 2011). The article and students' hopes and concerns were shared in a large group discussion in the second week of the term. The CL divided students into four reflecting and co-counseling teams with the intention that each team would rotate roles throughout the term.</p> <p>The structure of the two-hour class included a large group check-in at the start of class, a didactic review of the couples counseling theory for the week, and co-counseling couple session preparation before the couple, "Andi" and "Jo," entered for their session. Following Shurts et al.'s (2006) model, the co-counseling team would conduct a 20-minute session, followed by the reflecting team's (RT) 5 to 10-minute observations and feedback about the session shared with both the co-counselors and couple. Next, the couple and co-counseling team offered their feedback, thoughts, and perceptions of the RT comments. Afterward, the couple exited the session, and the entire group debriefed for the next 15 minutes until the conclusion of the class session. Progress couple tracking notes were maintained each week on a shared document for the entire class to contribute.</p> <p>Throughout the term, the CL elicited student feedback about the reflecting team experience both in group discussions and individual reflection posts. During the term, strengths of the teaching strategy including helpfulness to learn from other peers and the ability to engage in couples counseling emerged. Similarly, limitations such as challenges to co-counsel and feelings of competition were also presented.</p> <p>The couples counseling teaching team will share their perspectives on the pilot launch of the reflecting team model in an online classroom to include modifications to the model enacted during the term. They will describe the overall strengths as well as weaknesses of the approach in an online classroom. Finally, the teaching team will offer recommendations for future iterations of the reflecting team approach.</p>
Room 3	<p>Acculturative Stress and Post-migration Growth among Chinese Immigrants</p> <p>Presenters Poppy (Hua) Huo and Pei-Chun Tsai</p> <p>Description Based on Berry's acculturation framework, this initiative project aims to shed light on the positive changes and coping processes that Chinese immigrants employ during cross-cultural transitions. In particular, this project seeks to explore culturally specific coping (i.e., forbearance) and psychological flexibility as moderating factors for the association between acculturative stress, depression, and post-migration growth among Chinese immigrants. The implications of this project may contribute to provide a better understanding of how cultural factors maybe related to acculturative stress and post-migration growth of Chinese immigrants and inform culturally responsive interventions.</p>
Room 4	<p>Barriers to Psychedelic Therapy in Marginalized Communities</p> <p>Presenters Shannah Finkel, Alejandro Ruelas-Mora, and Nancy Haug, PhD</p> <p>Description Psychedelic-assisted psychotherapy (PAP) is emerging as an effective treatment for mental health disorders and has the potential to facilitate profound healing from racial stress and cultural trauma. This symposium invites a roundtable discussion about equitable access to PAP for people of color and proactively examines potential disparities that may exclude marginalized communities. We aim to: 1) promote equity by critiquing the systemic barriers that currently uphold disparities in PAP access; 2) discuss policy changes and socially just PAP programs the mental health field can implement, and; 3) explore research designs and participatory methods to increase multicultural representation in PAP.</p>

2:00 pm - 2:10 pm Break

2:15 pm - 3:00 pm Concurrent Session 2

Room 1

Integrating AI into Supervision for Trauma-Care Trainees with an Inclusive Lens

Presenters

Rachel Jacoby and Karen Roller

Description

Non-suicidal self-injury, suicidal ideation, and suicide attempts present challenges for counselors-in-training, requiring comprehensive AI interventions to enhance response capabilities. These complex scenarios often trigger concerns related to professional boundaries and emotional stability throughout training. Recognizing the profound personal impact of such histories on counselors-in-training, instructors and supervisors can employ AI-driven tools to provide tailored support. Especially in rural and global settings lacking established care systems for severe presentations, AI interventions play a pivotal role in augmenting counselors-in-training skills to address these issues with greater confidence and competence. Integrating AI strategies empowers counselors-in-training when responding to self-harm and suicidality.

Room 2

Cultural Factors in Suicide Risk Assessment and Intervention

Presenters

Francesco Yepez, Sara Wadhwa, and Michel Rattner

Description

This session will summarize the current research on best practices for suicide risk assessment and intervention with ethnic minority and LGBTQ+ clients. The presenters will first describe the Cultural Theory and Model of Suicide, a framework for understanding cultural risk and protective factors for suicide. This framework was developed by PAU faculty and distills the vast majority of available cultural suicide risk data into four factors: Cultural Idioms of Distress, Cultural Sanctions of Suicide, Social Discord, and Minority Stress. Each of these factors attenuates an individual's suicide risk according to the cultural norms regarding psychological suffering, psychological treatment, and suicide as an acceptable option that are promoted by other individuals in their community.

The presenters will then describe the creation of the Cultural Assessment for Risk of Suicide (CARS). This measure assesses the cultural risk and protective factors identified by the Cultural Theory and Model of Suicide. The measure consists of 39 self-report items on a 6 point Likert scale. It was normed on a sample of 950 adults, the vast majority of whom identified as African American, Latinx, Asian American, or LGBTQ+. The measure yields a risk profile across eight categories that map directly onto the four factors of the Model. The presenters will explain how to score the CARS and provide considerations for administration with clients.

Finally, the presenters will demonstrate how to develop a risk formulation and a safety plan using a CARS score profile. They will provide a case example of a ethnic and sexual minority client who is struggling with suicidal ideation. The presenters will illustrate that elevated scores on the risk profile indicate points of intervention, and lower scores indicate cultural protective factors that can bolster treatment outcomes. Our hope is that this presentation will enrich your understanding of how culture affects suicide risk, and that you integrate these procedures into your clinical practice.

Room 3

Investigating Mock Juror Verdicts in Stand Your Ground Cases

Presenters

Emma Sower, Reilly Gallin, and Amanda Fanniff, PhD

Description

Previous research in the area of Stand Your Ground (SYG) defenses focus on the analysis of real-life cases (Roman, 2013; Wagner et al., 2016); although the results provide an important incentive for continuing this research, there are too many variables at play in each instance to reach any conclusions about the impact of any individual variable. Vignette-based experiments provide an avenue to clarify the impact of specific variables on SYG application, including how the race and ethnicity of those involved impact decisions. Our goal is to design and implement a vignette-based study to explore the impact of racism on verdicts when all other variables are the same across vignettes. A pilot study was conducted to help us refine the study design, particularly the vignettes used. In the first phase of pilot testing (n = 10), participants were given a complex (witness statement corroborating events) or simple (no witness statement) vignette. Participants were asked to answer questions about the perpetrator's guilt and identify any additional information that may have helped determine guilt. We found that when participants were given the simple vignette, half (50%, n = 5) half (50%, n = 5) of the sample correctly guessed that we were interested in investigating the influence of race in SYG cases. Additionally, participants indicated the format of some of our questions (e.g., sliding scales) did not translate well to a mobile format. All ten participants indicated that the defendant was guilty (i.e., the SYG defense failed). Participants indicated that the defendant was guilty (i.e., the SYG defense failed). Participants indicated our questions were clear. Due to the issues with question format, limited variability, and the ease of identifying the purpose of our investigation, we conducted another round of data collection for the pilot study.

The second phase of the pilot study (n = 20) focused on making our study's purpose less clear and increasing the variability of participant responses. Based on the results of our first pilot study, we used the complex vignette and added several details. Our new vignettes for the second phase of the pilot study included adding a history of aggression between the defendant and the victim. This component was chosen due to real-life SYG cases in which the defendant and victim had previous interactions. Given how few participants felt that the defendant was eligible for a SYG defense in the first phase, we added the detail that the victim had a firearm, which the defendant saw. This was an attempt to make the SYG defense more plausible, and to increase the variability of participant evaluations of the defense. In this phase, an almost even split of participants rated the defendant as guilty (n = 11, 55%).

The pilot studies will inform the final design to ensure that there is sufficient variability in subject responses for data analysis in the main study. Our next steps include applying for funding for the main study. For our full study, we will be using the Tolerance of Racism scale (TOR; Hunt et al., 2021) to measure participants' acceptance of bias towards oppressed groups. This measure demonstrates construct and discriminatory validity related to symbolic and modern racism (Hunt et al., 2021). Our hypotheses are:

1: There will be a main effect of perpetrator race, such that Black defendants are more likely to be found guilty than White defendants.

1a: The effect of perpetrator race will be moderated by victim race, such that the relationship between a Black defendant vignette and guilty verdicts will be stronger when the victim in the vignette is White.

2: The relationship between the race of the perpetrator and guilt will be mediated by participants' tolerance of racism.

2a. The relationship between the interaction of victim and perpetrator race and guilt will be mediated by the participants' tolerance of racism.

During the session, we will also include a discussion about the identity-based self-reflection our team has incorporated throughout the research process. This includes discussing how to do research focusing on racism while holding the oppressor identity, the importance of applied research being used for policy change and not staying in the ivory tower, and how to develop and create vignettes that focus on race and identity without the participants identifying what you are researching. We will then transition into the discussion portion of this presentation.

Room 4	<p>Cult Violence and Trauma, and How We Can Help</p> <p>Presenters Jennifer Johnson</p> <p>Description This presentation provides an overview addressing contemporary research on cult violence and the manifestations of cult/religious trauma. It overviews current barriers to care and the role counselors play in providing assistance, resources, and potential frameworks for treatment. This topic is significant as many cult survivors often lack tailored support due to the scarcity of specialized care, despite the prevalence of cults. Drawing from personal experience as a cult survivor, the presenter advocates for the need for increased awareness and understanding and uses current evidence to attempt to dismantle the societal stigma associated with cults.</p>
3:00 pm - 3:10 pm Break	
3:15 pm - 4:00 pm Concurrent Session 3	
Room 1	<p>Advancing Inclusive Excellence through Telemental Health: The PAU eClinic Model</p> <p>Presenters Donna Sheperis and Krystle Herbert</p> <p>Description The PAU eClinic integrates artificial intelligence (AI) supported supervision and digital therapeutics to train students in delivering culturally responsive, evidence-based care. Supervisory analysis of session data reveals insights into therapist interventions, common themes, and client outcomes. These metrics guide supervision and seminars to enhance clinical skills within a culturally responsive approach. The eClinic model demonstrates how leveraging telemental health, digital therapeutics, AI, and cultural humility can promote inclusive excellence in mental health care delivery and clinical training. This session will explore how data-driven insights can inform best practices, foster cultural responsiveness, and advance equity in mental health care.</p>
Room 2	<p>Exploring Mental Health Support for the Black Community: A Guide to Accessing Psychological Treatments</p> <p>Presenters Andia Ruiz Payne Narcis</p> <p>Description We will introduce an exciting initiative to educate underserved communities, specifically the black community, about their treatment options. The initiative will feature four psychoeducational videos, each lasting five minutes. The goal is to empower individuals to make more informed choices when considering therapy. The session will cover the following topics: Exploring different treatment modalities. Providing a guide to engaging in Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CBT) in the Black community. Understanding the potential benefits of Eye Movement Desensitization and Reprocessing (EMDR) for the Black Community dealing with PTSD. Exploring how the Black community can benefit from Emotion-Focused Therapy when addressing emotions.</p>
Room 3	<p>Embracing Emotional Diversity: A Mindful Approach to Enhancing Vitality</p> <p>Presenters Piumi Yaggahahewage and Pei-Chun Tsai</p> <p>Description This initiative project aims to examine the mechanism of how a novel mindfulness approach (i.e., awareness meditation) may facilitate embracing emotional diversity (i.e., the constructive expression of suppressed emotions, such as anger or jealousy), in turn to increase the emotional freedom and vitality—defined as the energy and strength for</p>

	<p>continued growth and engagement (Stern, 2010) among women of color. The concept of awareness meditation practice draws on the principles of Yin and Yang to enable a comprehensive emotional experience in a secure, psychologist-guided setting. —The implications of this project are likely to contribute to enhance well-being and therapeutic innovation in clinical psychology.</p>
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