The Honors School
Annual Research Conference
2007

Second Annual Honors School Research Conference

Bey Hall, H.R. Young Auditorium
Saturday, April 28, 10:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m.

It is with great pleasure that The Honors School presents its
Second Annual Research Conference

Student presenters include research in the fields of:

Mathematics
Political Science
English
Psychology
Communication
History
Technology

Order of Events

10:00 a.m. Welcoming Remarks—Dr. Thomas S. Pearson,
Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs

SESSION ONE 10:20—1:00
Meghan Moratelli
Ann Welsh
Lauren Korcz
Alanna Raines
Josh Hammond
Catherine Heredia
Karo-Jae Bryan
Lauren Ciraulo

SESSION TWO 1:30—3:00
Erinn Deignan
Dan Duffy
Stacey Ciprich
Robert Cornero

BREAK 1:00—1:30

Additional students completing Thesis but unable to attend include:

Alena Competello, Anthony D’Amico, Krystle Hinds, Lindsay Pino,
Preethi Pirlamarla, and Timothy Swartz

**Please see last page of program for Thesis titles, Chief Advisors and Second Readers.
The purpose of this thesis will be to chronicle and dissect the techniques of muckrakers and New Journalists so as to synthesize their styles with the styles of the New New Journalists. The journalistic tendencies within all three genres are interrelated; all use facts and observations for the foundation for their work but also use creative, literary, and largely fictional approaches, seeking to become a main channel through which campus information is communicated to both students and faculty. Soon it became apparent that the current means of information dissemination were woefully inadequate and outdated, failing to reach a large portion of the university population. This project was proposed as a pilot to solve this problem. Through the use of an open-source Content Management System (CMS), an easy to use portal was eventually constructed, allowing for the type of media convergence that only online technologies can provide, neatly managed through a relatively simple and intuitive user interface. Should the interface be adopted by the University, it quite literally has the potential to affect thousands of people at Monmouth University and the surrounding community.

Abstract: This thesis is based on the belief that people today in America Idealize the image of the 1950s family to such an extent that it models modern family behavior even now, fifty years later. This "ideal," through historical analysis, did in fact NOT exist and only by the use of the media and other propaganda techniques, such as the invention of the television, is this belief reified today and allows for the existence of this ideal family to dominate popular familial definitions.

Abstract: The purpose of this paper is to critically examine the reason behind Iran’s desire to pursue nuclear ambitions and obtain nuclear weapons and the validity of the US opposition to it. This requires examining the current status of political realism and its solutions thus far as it pertains to power relations in this section of the world. It is also important to determine whether the implementation of Kantian philosophy, concurrent with deterrence theory, will aid in finding a solution to the current Iranian “dilemma.” Finally, the focus will explore the current inclusion/exclusion policy as it concerns Iran and Israel, and to determine whether or not the possession of weapons by Iran is as big a threat as it has been heralded to be or whether the pursuit of all nuclear ambitions by Iran could lead to stability in the country as well as in the Middle Eastern region.

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Abstract: Study abroad can be defined as any educational program that takes place outside a specific country of origin (Kitsantas, 2004). Previous research has suggested that studying abroad at a college level can have a positive affect on students’ views of the self, as well as views regarding other countries and cultures. The purpose of the present study is to examine several potential predictors of interest in study abroad and ethnocentrism, including personal growth, self-understanding, and previous study abroad experience. In a study of 426 undergraduate students from three universities in New Jersey, participants completed an online survey about their sense of self, interest in and experience with study abroad, and their ethnocentrism. As hypothesized, the number of countries visited (r = .12, p = .01), personal growth (r = .47, p = .00), and self-understanding (r = .19, p = .00), were negatively correlated with ethnocentrism. Further, those who expressed interest in study abroad had lower ethnocentrism (p = .04) and higher personal growth (p = .00) than those who were not interested. Finally, those who studied abroad in the past had higher personal growth (p = .01) and self-understanding (p = .05) compared to those who had not studied abroad. Taken together, these results suggest that self variables such as personal growth and self-understanding are related to ethnocentrism and interest in study abroad. Potential implications of these results on undergraduate study abroad programs will be discussed.
Meghan Moratelli  
A Mathematical Exploration of Crystallographic Groups and Frieze Patters in Art and Architecture  
Abstract: In mathematics, one dimensional and two dimensional objects can be classified according to their symmetries. Wallpaper patterns in the plane and frieze, or border, patterns are two such examples and prove to hold a special property of only admitting a finite number of possible symmetry groups. Within the architectural world, wallpaper and frieze patterns are common and have added to the beauty of many famous architectural monuments and buildings throughout the world. The patterns have been carefully studied for their symmetries within these famous architectural structures as well. This thesis provides an explanation and analysis of two dimensional crystallographic groups, or wallpaper patterns, and one dimensional crystallographic groups, or frieze patterns, by means of proving mathematical theorems and including examples of these patterns in Spanish architecture, particularly located in Segovia, Spain, which have been gathered and analyzed during a study abroad trip to Spain.

Alanna Joy Raines  
Writing Strategies to Improve the Self  
Abstract: The present study examined the possibility that one’s self-understanding (the compilation of self-concept clarity, self-esteem, & self-acceptance) can be improved through a writing exercise. Participants were asked to complete either a self-evaluation (evaluating traits/characteristics across situations), progress report (evaluating personal goals/accomplishments in terms of the past, present, and future), or write about an unrelated topic during three 20 minute sessions over the course of a week. As predicted, participants in the self-evaluation condition increased in self-understanding from pre- to post-test, compared to the control group ($r = .11; p = .01$). The self-evaluation condition increased in self-understanding compared to the progress report condition ($r = .15; p = .00$), yet the progress report condition did not significantly differ from the control ($p = .14$). In contrast, perceived stress decreased pre- to post-test in the progress report condition ($r = .24; p = .00$) compared to the control. Overall, increases in self-understanding resulted in decreases in perceived stress ($r = -.24; p = .02$). These results suggest that increases in self-understanding can result from completing a self-evaluation, and completing a progress report may be beneficial for reducing stress. These findings have implications for various applied settings, such as cognitive therapy for anxiety, as well as other psychotherapeutic strategies.

Ann Welsh  
Who’s to blame for bad grades, you or your professor?: The effect of classroom atmosphere on test anxiety and performance  
Abstract: The present research looked to examine the effect of classroom atmosphere on test anxiety and performance. In regard to this project, the term classroom atmosphere encompassed two ideas, class size, as well as professor effectiveness. Class size was reported by the participant. Professor effectiveness was measured by a student satisfaction scale that considered the congruity between students’ needs and the professor’s teaching style. Test anxiety was measured using the Test Anxiety Inventory (TAI) and test performance was reported by the participant. The Rosenberg Scale of Self Esteem was also included. Participants were students from both Monmouth and Rutgers Universities. Results will be reported at the Honors Research Conference.

**Additional Students Completing Thesis**

*Alena Competello  
Trauma and the Narrative: The Italian-American Evacuation and Internment During World War II  
Chief Advisor: Dr. Lisa Vetere  
Second Reader: Professor Susan Douglass

*Anthony D’Amico  
Acquiring Power: The Modern Business World and the Political and Philosophical Foundations in the History of Thought  
Chief Advisor: Dr. Joseph Mosca  
Second Reader: Dr. James Cavazzini

*Krystle Hinds  
The Mathematics of Google  
Chief Advisor: Dr. Joseph Coyle  
Second Reader: Dr. David Marshall

*Lindsey Pino  
Propaganda In World War I  
Chief Advisor: Dr. Fred McKitrick  
Second Reader: Dr. Susan Starke

*Preethi Pirlamarla  
Studying HIF-1 in the Rat Testis  
Chief Advisor: Dr. Michael Palladino  
Second Reader: Dr. Dennis Rhoads

*Timothy Swartz  
The GABAergic Pathway and Protein Quantification in Alcoholic Adolescent Rats  
Chief Advisor: Dr. Dennis Rhoads  
Second Reader: Dr. Dorothy Hutter