FALL 2026 NEWSLETTER

ABCT Intimate Relationships Research & Treatment SIG *Vol. 33, No. 2*



IN THIS ISSUE

OFFICER LETTERS.....2
Hear from the SIG Co-Leaders, Student Co-Leaders, Treasurer, DEI Committee, & Media Coordinators.

LAB UPDATES & KUDOS.....9
Catch up on the latest from relationship science colleagues across the globe!

ABCT 2026 SIG SCHEDULE.....22
Find out where to catch SIG members' presentations at ABCT 2026 in Baltimore, MD!

OPPORTUNITIES.....24
Explore upcoming career opportunities affiliated with SIG members.

HOT OFF THE PRESS.....26
Check out publications from SIG members since the spring 2026 newsletter!

DISCLAIMER

This newsletter is published by the Intimate Relationships SIG. The contents of this publication have not been reviewed, approved, or endorsed by the Association For Behavioral and Cognitive Therapies.

CURRENT OFFICERS

Co-Leaders:
Sarah Carter & Jazz Hogan

Student Co-Leaders:
Emily Bibby & Allison Tobar-Santamaria

Treasurer:
Yunying (Annie) Le



DEI Committee:
Alika Tsytsurina Lauren Simpson
Danielle Weber Michelle Ramos

Media Coordinators:
Alyssa Miville & Madison Walker

Newsletter Co-Editors:
John V. Miller & Emily Spargo

LETTER FROM SIG CO-LEADERS

ABCT is just around the corner, and we're looking forward to seeing everyone in Baltimore! Hope you're ready for some Old Bay! We have several opportunities to connect with fellow relationship researchers this year, along with some important SIG updates and new opportunities to get involved.

Conference Events

Back by popular demand (we hope!), our preconference will feature **Partner Up: A Professional Matchmaking Event for Relationship Researchers**! Join us Thursday, November 12, from 7:00–9:00 pm in Peale B (First Floor) at the Hilton. We'll be bringing SIG members together for a series of short, structured conversations designed to spark new connections and collaborations. Have a dataset waiting for the right collaborator? An idea for a grant or paper you'd love to develop? Or just want to hear what other relationship researchers are working on? Come meet some new colleagues and see what opportunities emerge! We'll provide snacks and drinks.

We're also looking forward to our SIG-sponsored student symposium, **"Interpersonal Processes Across Diverse Romantic Relationship Contexts,"** on Friday, November 13, from 4:00–5:30 pm in Room 342 (Level 300) of the Convention Center. Please come out and support our student researchers!

Our **SIG business meeting** will be Friday, November 13, from 1:00–2:30 pm in Johnson A (First Floor) at the Hilton. We have some exciting things to discuss this year, including new SIG leadership opportunities and proposed changes to our awards. We hope to see you there!

And don't forget the IR SIG Happy Hour, hosted by our student co-leaders! Join us **Saturday, November 14, from 6:15pm to 8:15pm** at **Liv's Tavern** to catch up with colleagues and meet other SIG members.

SIG Officer Elections

First, a huge thank-you to our outgoing officers and committee members! Sarah Carter (Co-Leader), Emily Bibby (Student Co-Leader), Yunying (Annie) Le (Treasurer), Alyssa Miville (Media Coordinator), John V. Miller (Newsletter Co-Editor), Michelle Ramos and Alika Tsytsurina (DEI Committee), Melanie Fischer (Junior Awards Committee), and Beth Allen and Sarah Whitton (Senior Awards Committee) have all generously contributed their time and expertise to the SIG. We are so grateful for everything they've done!

We're also happy to share that we've completed the transition to staggered officer and committee terms, an effort originally spearheaded by former co-leaders Shelby Scott and Kayla Knopp. Going forward, we'll have a mix of new and returning members each year, helping us maintain continuity while bringing in new perspectives.

LETTER FROM SIG CO-LEADERS

That means we have quite a few opportunities to get involved this year! We'll be seeking a new **Co-Leader** to serve alongside Jazz, who has generously agreed to stay on for a third year, as well as a **Student Co-Leader**, **Treasurer**, **Media Coordinator**, and **Newsletter Co-Editor**. We're also looking for new members of our **DEI Committee** (at least one faculty and one student member), **Junior Awards Committee**, and **Senior Awards Committee**.

Please consider volunteering or nominating a colleague! These positions are a great way to contribute to the SIG, get to know other relationship researchers, and help shape our community.

SIG Awards

We have some exciting ideas for expanding our SIG awards, and we'll be bringing two proposals to the membership for a vote at the business meeting.

The proposed **Outstanding Student Presentation Award** would recognize exceptional student poster presentations at the ABCT SIG Poster Expo, while the proposed **Impact Award** would recognize papers that make meaningful contributions to the real-world understanding or improvement of relationship health.

We're also thinking about how our awards can do more to honor the researchers who have helped build our field and our SIG over the years. We're looking forward to sharing these ideas and getting your input!

We hope to see many of you at ABCT, whether it's at the preconference, symposium, business meeting, or happy hour. And if you've been thinking about getting more involved in the SIG, this is a great year to do it!

See you soon!

Your SIG Co-Leaders,
Sarah Carter, Ph.D., and Jazz Hogan, Ph.D.

Looking for Our Next Student Leaders!

It's never too early to get involved!! Our Media Coordinator and Newsletter Editor positions are great entry points for post-bacs and first- or second-year graduate students. For those in their second or third year of graduate school, we'd love to see you consider the Student Co-Leader position. Faculty and mentors, please encourage your students to consider these opportunities. Getting involved early is a great way to build connections within the relationship research community!

LETTER FROM SIG STUDENT CO-LEADERS

As you prepare for the 2026 ABCT conference, please make note of several important opportunities and events.

We happily invite you to the **SIG Happy Hour**! It is a great opportunity to informally meet new members and catch up with old friends! Join us for appetizers and drinks:

Date: Saturday, November 14th, 2026
Time: 6:15pm to 8:15pm
Location: Liv's Tavern, 1113 S Charles St, Baltimore, MD 21230

Thank you to everyone participating in the **2026 SIG Mentorship Program**! We are grateful to have amazing mentors and mentees who keep this program fun and beneficial to our SIG each year. We are thrilled to see this program continuing to expand, with 16 matches this year!

If you are a trainee (undergraduate to postdoc) and have not already, please **sign up for the Trainee SIG Listserv**:

1. Email abctirsig-trainees+subscribe@googlegroups.com from the email you would like to join from (your email can be as simple as "I would like to join the listserv.")

2. You will receive an automated email from abctirsig-trainees+subconfirm@googlegroups.com letting you know that the request to join has been received. In that email, either click on the "Join This Group" button OR send an email reply back (again with something as simple as "Add me!")

3. You will receive an automated message that says you are now a member of the abctirsig-trainees google group, which is the trainee listserv.

We are hosting an **informal trainee morning coffee meet-up** on Friday, November 13th. Come meet other trainees to enjoy the conference with! Make sure to join the IR Trainee SIG listserv to receive more information or reach out to us individually.

Finally, let's show support for our fellow SIG members at the conference! Remember to check the schedule and mark your calendars with the relationship presentations and SIG-sponsored events. We are excited to celebrate everyone's hard work and accomplishments!

Safe travels and see you in Baltimore!

Emily Bibby & Allison Tobar-Santamaria

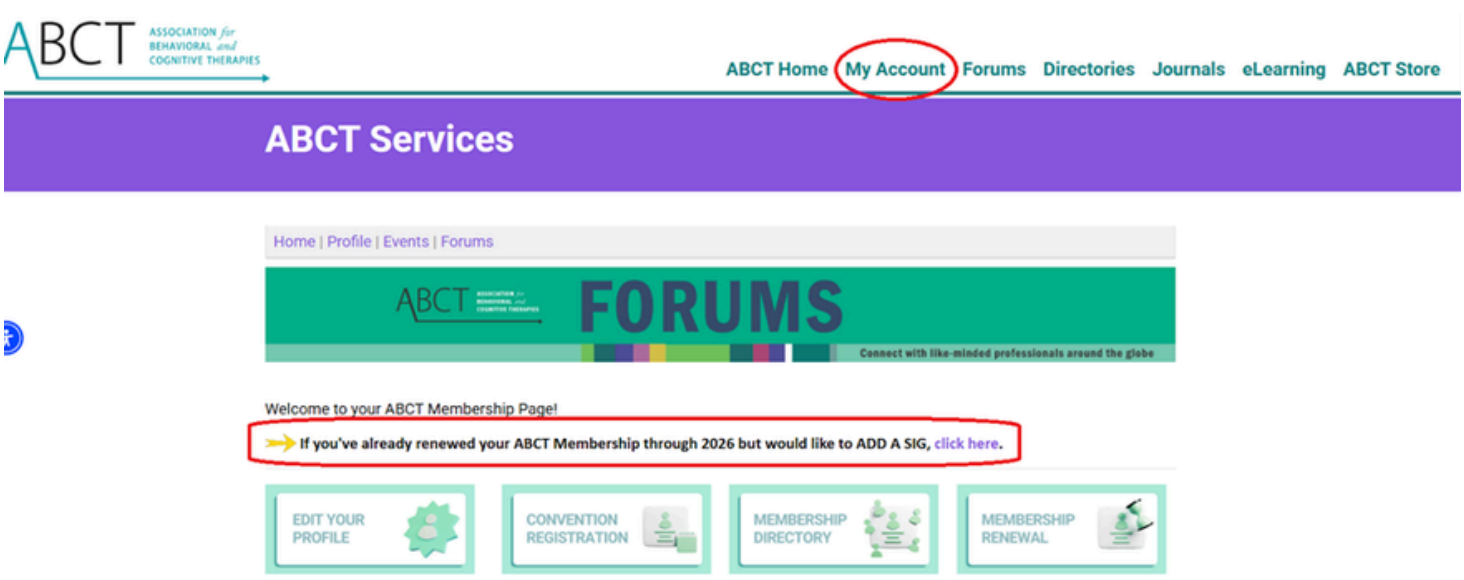
LETTER FROM SIG TREASURER

Hello SIG Members!

This is a reminder that it is not too late to pay dues for the 2026–2027 academic year. Dues are $30 for professional members and $5 for students, first-year post-docs, and retired members. For every professional membership, $5 automatically goes toward the Intimate Relationships SIG Emerging Scholars Fund (previously known as the Underrepresented Scholars Fund).

As you may recall, we now collect dues through ABCT's formal channel. We are now receiving quarterly reports on members who have paid their dues through the portal. If you are unsure whether you paid dues through ABCT's formal channel for 2026-2027 academic year, feel free to email me.

Registering for the conference is a great time to also pay your dues. However, you can pay them separately if you prefer, after you've registered for the conference. Below, you will find the instructions again on how to pay through the ABCT portal. Go to the ABCT portal (https://services.abct.org/i4a/ams/amslogin.cfm), go to "my account", and you should be able to pay for SIG membership (see screenshot below).





LETTER FROM SIG TREASURER CONT.

If you are having trouble paying dues through the system, you can still send your dues electronically via Venmo (send payment to @Yunying-Le). We are also accepting donations to the Emerging Scholars Fund through Venmo. It is important to designate the payment as "Send to friends and family" to avoid processing fees. For all dues, indicate “ABCT Intimate Relationships SIG" in the note.

If this is your first time paying dues, please also complete the membership form https://forms.gle/3xustNBLzbfApjgT8.

An update on our membership status and dues:

- We have 216 active members (104 professional, 112 students).
- Our current balance is $4,715. Since my last update, I have collected $365 in dues. I have also reimbursed expenses for shipping projector ($148).
- The Emerging Scholar Fund has a balance of $775. Since my last update, I have collected $50 from dues and directed donations towards this fund.

Please don’t hesitate to contact me (yunying.le@du.edu) with any questions or concerns about dues or membership.

My best,
Yunying (Annie) Le, Ph.D.



venmo

LETTER FROM SIG DEI COMMITTEE

Hello from your Intimate Relationships SIG DEI Committee! We are excited to continue our work to promote diversity, equity, and inclusion in the SIG over the coming year.

This year, we were thrilled to provide awards to two new scholars from the Emerging Scholars Fund (ESF)! Please help us congratulate this year's ESF awardees, **Destiny Fava** (mentored by Dr. Brian Doss) and **Brooke Franklin** (mentored by Dr. Katie Baucom and Dr. Anu Asnaani)!

We are also requesting donations for the Emerging Scholars Fund for our next cycle of awards. The IR SIG recognizes that our field is stronger when all voices are represented, and we are committed to increasing diversity within our field. We know that the cost of applying to graduate school or internship programs and networking at conferences is a significant barrier to entry within our field, particularly for young scholars from minoritized backgrounds, and we created the Emerging Scholars Fund to help close the gap. This fund is open to all students and potential students from underrepresented groups (broadly defined) to cover any costs associated with getting into graduate school, getting through graduate school, and internship.

We will be accepting applications again in Spring 2027 for the next cycle and would love to be able to help as many scholars as possible. Please consider donating to this important cause - any amount helps!

Please reach out to Sarah Carter (sarah.carter.ctr@usuhs.edu) for information on how to donate.

Reach out to Danielle Weber (daniellemorganweber@gmail.com) if you have any questions about the fund!

Thank you,

Danielle Weber, Alika Tsytsurina, Michelle Ramos, and Lauren Simpson



LETTER FROM SIG MEDIA COORDINATORS

Happy Fall, everyone! We just wanted to provide some quick reminders about some of the changes we made over this past year.

If you have a separate email that you'd like **to join our listserv** from and/or if you know of anyone who might be interested in our SIG's listserv, here are the steps involved:

1. Send a blank email to abctirsig+subscribe@googlegroups.com from the email you're hoping to join from.
2. You will then receive an automated email from our SIG letting you know that the request to join has been received.
3. Send an email reply back to confirm your interest, and at that point you will receive an automated message that says you are now a member of the abctirsig group, which is our listserv.

Please send new or interested folks the above blurb as well as this brief form to fill out: https://forms.gle/BLUux6LD2xZTxnqj6 so we can learn more about who is joining and see if we need to update our processes.

Don't forget that **we have also created a listserv specifically for trainees** (including undergraduate students through postdocs). This is meant to serve as an avenue for trainees to more easily reach out with informal or professional development questions (e.g., around application seasons; for job-related resources). If you are a trainee at any stage, we want to see you join! You can send an email to abctirsig-trainees+subscribe@googlegroups.com from the email you'd like to join from and follow the same steps above. If you are beyond the postdoc stage, please unsubscribe and/or refrain from subscribing to this listserv so that we can keep it preserved for just students and trainees.

Please reach out to us at abctcouplessig@gmail.com if you have any questions, concerns, difficulties, or other ideas you'd like to see implemented. Fresh ideas are always welcome and we are always seeking feedback on how we can improve our communications and media for our SIG!

Cheers,
Alyssa Miville and Madison Walker

LAB UPDATES & KUDOS

Couples, Assessment, and Relational Experiences (CARE) Lab

Dr. Quinn Hendershot | Arizona State University

Lab Update

Quinn started working within ASU's Department of Psychology as a Clinical Assistant Professor. She started the Couples, Assessment, and Relational Experiences (CARE) Lab, where she will primarily be mentoring Masters and undergraduate level students.

Kudos

- Quinn got married in August!



Couple Adjustment to Stress and Trauma (CAST) Lab

Dr. Christina Balderrama-Durbin | Binghamton University – SUNY

Lab Update

The CAST Lab is dedicated to advancing our understanding of the risk and protective factors that shape relationship functioning among intimate partners affected by trauma and adversity, with particular attention to couples from high-risk and marginalized communities. In recent months, we have devoted substantial effort to understanding the sociopolitical experiences and concerns of sexual minority women and examining how these experiences intersect with relationship functioning and advocacy for sexual and gender minority couples.

Fifth-year graduate student, Jessica Hill, has successfully proposed her dissertation examining relationship health and resilience of newly enlisted and partnered military service members. She has also continued her research investigating how cultural and socioeconomic factors shape perceptions of childhood neglect.

Third-year graduate student, Rebecca Smith, is engaged in diverse and impactful research examining how sociopolitical concerns and experiences relate to relationship functioning among sexual minority couples. Her work contributes to the CAST Lab's broader efforts to understand how social and contextual factors shape relationship health among marginalized populations.

The CAST Lab is pursuing new funding opportunities to help refine and test prevention/early intervention strategies for military couples. We're thrilled to continue expanding access to evidence-based tools that help military couples build and maintain strong, resilient relationships.

Finally, we are thrilled to welcome first-year graduate student, Anna Brubaker, to the CAST Lab! Her research interests include social support, intimate relationship functioning, and marginalized communities. Anna recently moved across the country to return to her Northeastern roots, and we are delighted to have her as part of the CAST Lab family!

<u>Kudos</u>

- Recent graduate, Melissa Gates, began her post-doctoral fellowship at the San Diego VA! She has a bright future ahead!
- Rebecca Smith successfully defended her thesis and completed her comprehensive exams!



Clinical Couple and Family Psychology, Dept. of Psychology

Dr. Melanie Fischer | University of Marburg, Germany

Lab Update

Our research foci include psychopathology in couples and families (basic and intervention research) as well as topics related to couple relationships more broadly (understanding, preventing, and treating relationship distress). Current doctoral students are Sophie Blum, Anne Vogel, Laura Weber, and Nina Winkelmann, along with students completing their undergraduate and Master's theses in our lab. In November, Dr. Nicolás García Mejía will begin his postdoc position in our lab – welcome!

We continue collecting and analyzing data on multiple projects with a focus on OCD and depression in an intimate relationship context, couple-based treatments for depression, relationship experiences of sexual and gender minorities and couples considering consensual non-monogamy. Additionally, we are in the process of establishing a couples & family clinic, where we will offer couple- and family-based treatments for individual psychopathology as well as couples therapy. Part of our lab will cap off a busy year of conference travels with ABCT – we look forward to seeing many of you there!

Kudos

- Melanie Fischer and Nina Winkelmann were elected spokesperson and secretary, respectively, of the Family Psychology SIG of the German Psychological Association.



Couples Lab for Observational Studies (CLOSE)

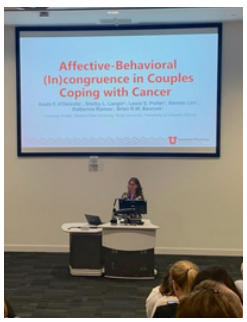
Dr. Brian Baucom | University of Utah

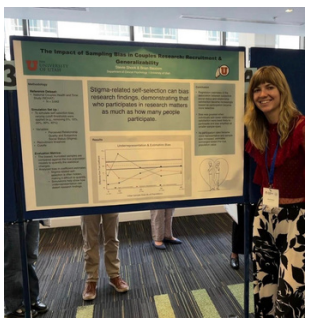
Lab Update

- Our research group continues to grow as part of the Behavioral Health Innovation and Dissemination Center and Department of Psychology at the U of U.
- We are collaborating on a number of grant-funded projects on topics including couples and stroke, couples and sleep, couples and cancer, couples and suicide, dyadic methods issues, youth wellbeing and summer camp engagement, and digital tools for mental health. We've also started partnering with other groups at our university to help support campus wellness
- We have welcomed a new Project Manager to our team, Liz Elvira
- We are recruiting a post-doc! See the **Opportunities** section

Kudos

- Recent graduate, Dr. Robyn Kilshaw is now a post-doc at tOSU and recently had a submission accepted at the Technology in Psychiatry Summit!
- Recent graduate, Dr. Kiran Kaur is now a post-doc at Stanford!
- Graduate students, Stevie Shock and Anais d'Oelsnitz, presented at IARR and the Biennial National Caregiving Research Conference this summer and fall!
- Previous lab Co-Director, Dr. Feea Leifker, has started a new position as the Associate Director of Clinical Training and Clinic Director of EOS Foundation Behavioral Health Clinic at the University of Arizona. We miss her dearly but are so proud of her and excited for her to begin this new adventure!







Crasta Lab

Dr. Dev Crasta | VA Center of Excellence for Suicide Prevention (COE-SP)

Lab Update

We are excited to share that the COE-SP has taken on a series of relationship and family research initiatives in Veteran suicide prevention. The following projects have recently reached a point where we are ready for analysis (and publication!). This means we are also at a place where we would love to get some support analyzing this data (see **Opportunities** section):

- In August, we recently completed recruitment on an N=72 dyad RCT evaluating the Relationship Checkup (developed by IR-SIG's own James Cordova) in Veterans at elevated risk for suicide. Follow-up will be complete by March 2027.
- In September, we received approval to launch a program evaluation of all family-therapy contacts offered in VA from 2015-2025. Data cleaning is ongoing, with an expected completion in the Spring. It appears we will end with somewhere between 1.1 - 1.5 million unique contacts over that 10-year period reaching 1-2% of Veterans engaged in VA Behavioral Health Care.



Institute for Relationship Science

Drs. Galena Rhoades, Scott Stanley, Nicholas Perry, & Annie (Yunying) Le | University of Denver

Lab Update

The Institute for Relationship Science is a group merging three relationship-focused research labs at the University of Denver engaging in community-centered science, evidence-based initiatives, and public scholarship for the betterment of interpersonal relationships, families, communities, and the public good. The Institute's vision is a collaborative relationship between scholars and the community that applies the strongest research methodology to solve real problems for people, families, and communities who are typically marginalized and underrepresented, including LGBTQ+ couples and families.

Kudos

- Galena was recently awarded the Eminent Scholar Award at University of Denver and will become a Fellow of ABCT at the conference in Baltimore.
- Our Institute for Relationship Science recently received funding for a new National Center for Work, Economic Mobility, and Strong Families from the Administration for Children and Families – see **Opportunities** section!
- We will also begin several new evaluations of community-based relationship education and fatherhood programs with new funding from the Administration for Children and Families this fall. We continue to do research in collaboration with Thriving Families, the nonprofit that runs the MotherWise program in Denver on new services now offered there including prenatal massage and a new trauma-information parenting program.



Depression, Affect, Relationships, and Equity Lab

Dr. Daphne Y. Liu | University of Missouri-St. Louis

Lab Update

The Depression, Affect, Relationships, and Equity Lab is a relatively new lab established at the University of Missouri-St. Louis (UMSL). The lab aims to better understand affective and relational processes in depression, as well as how depression manifests in close relationships across diverse populations. We are excited to welcome two graduate students, Christine Wehner and Mark Hastings, to the lab in Fall 2026.

Our lab is currently conducting a study aimed at identifying person-specific risk factors for depression using ecological momentary assessment (EMA), with the goal of informing personalized interventions. We are also planning to launch an EMA study to examine interpersonal emotion regulation and partner accommodation behaviors in romantic couples with depression. We hope to better understand how these interpersonal and relational processes are linked to romantic partners' well-being at both the individual and relational levels. Dr. Liu will be reviewing applications from applicants who are interested in joining her lab and the Clinical Psychology PhD Program at UMSL for Fall 2027.



Relationship Studies Lab

Dr. Beth Allen | CU Denver



Lab Update

The Relationship Studies Lab is situated in a Clinical Health Psychology Ph.D. program at the University of Colorado Denver. This year, we welcomed a new graduate student (Kelly McCray) and four undergraduate student assistants (Charles Schiell, Randall Suro, Aisha Ali, and Ali Al Rubaiawi) into the lab. The student assistants have begun working on qualitative coding of Lizette Sanchez's dissertation project, examining the impact of partner infidelity from the perspective of undergraduates at CU Denver.

With wonderful colleagues, Beth continues to work on projects related to military couple functioning, with plans to expand collaboration with the new CU Denver Center for Psychedelic Research to integrate couples' research, training, and clinical work. Students in the lab embrace a breadth of research areas and collaborations and a number of students (e.g., Annie Scandurro, Morgan Nance, Karalee Kothe) have published papers in 2026 in areas outside of the specialty area of relationship functioning.

Kudos

- Claire Chapman successfully proposed her MA thesis, examining positive bonding as a potential mediator between PTSD numbing and relationship satisfaction.
- Karalee Kothke successfully defended her dissertation proposal, examining participants' experiences in a psychospiritual intervention for cardiac patients.
- Morgan Nance began her pre-doctoral internship at Denver Health in the Adult Compassionate Substance Care track.
- Karima Shehadeh graduated in Spring 2026 and accepted her postdoctoral fellowship position at the VA San Diego.

SHARE (Stress, Health, and Relationships in Everyday life) Lab

Dr. Danielle Weber | UNC Greensboro



Lab Update

The SHARE lab is focused on understanding how couples navigate health challenges and external stress over time, along with understanding the relationship processes that enhance couples' resilience while experiencing these challenges.

As a new lab, we are excited to see our team grow. We welcomed our first-year doctoral student Katie this fall to join our second-year doctoral student and our great team of undergraduate assistants.

We have different projects in various phases:

- We recently launched the Moving Together project, which is a collaboration with the Department of Kinesiology. We are recruiting older couples to complete an EMA and observational study in which we're interested in how their relationship dynamics impact their physical activity and other health behaviors in daily life.

- Last year we collected data for a study examining how people experience and manage different external stressors in their relationships, and how these experiences may differ across the lifespan. Data analysis is ongoing.

- Larissa is taking the lead on different projects within our longitudinal dataset of older adults in committed relationships. She is preparing to propose her thesis focused on perceived and received partner support and their effects on relationship satisfaction and mental health among older adults. In a separate project, she has also run preliminary analyses examining the differential effect of partner and family support on different outcomes in this sample.

- We are also conducting a secondary analysis of our dataset of recordings of older couples' communication, including behavioral coding, transcription, and analysis of vocal emotional arousal.

- We continue to invest effort in designing new projects, including a mixed-method design focused on how couples navigate external stressors such as discrimination.

- We also continue work on different collaborative projects, including collaborations with colleagues at the University of Georgia focused on relationship functioning and depression among older adults.

<u>Kudos</u>

- Dr. Weber recently received a research grant from the Mental Research Institute to support our new lab project!



The Today's Couples and Families Research Program

Dr. Sarah Whitton | University of Cincinnati



Lab Update

Thanks to a successful lawsuit against NIH for unlawful termination of grants focused on sexual and gender minority (SGM) people, the R01 that funds our FAB400 study was reinstated! This year has been largely filled with restarting this longitudinal cohort study of sexual minority women and their relationships. We relaunched data collection in June and participants are currently completing waves 10-12.

The R25-funded IRIS Academy, an interdisciplinary extracurricular program in sexual and reproductive health research for graduate students in health-related fields, enrolled our second cohort of scholars! The cohort includes graduates students from regional programs in medicine, occupational therapy, speech and language, pharmacy, and clinical and counseling psychology.

Led by graduate students, we are also conducting qualitative research on bi+ women's experiences with formal support services following intimate partner violence and on transgender individuals' experiences of stigma within the SGM community.

Dr. Whitton hopes to recruit a new student to begin at UC's doctoral program in clinical psychology in the fall of 2027.

Kudos

- Emily Devlin graduated with her PhD in August 2026.
- Charlie Giraud received a University Research Council Graduate Student Research Fellowship for their project, "*Validating a Measure of Cognitive Appraisals for Use with Sexual and Gender Minorities*." They also received a highly competitive Dean's dissertation fellowship grant for 2026-27 to support their dissertation exploring latent profiles of resilience-related resources among SGM young people.

- Abby Fischbach has continued her research on gender identity development among transgender and gender-diverse populations, as part of her 3-year NSF Graduate Research Fellowship.
- Niki Altenberg obtained intramural funding to support a qualitative study exploring bi+ women's experiences with support services for intimate partner violence.

Couple & Family Adaptation to Stress Lab

Dr. Steffany Fredman | The Pennsylvania State University

Lab Update

We're thrilled to be starting a DoD/DoW-funded RCT to compare Couple HOPES, an online self-guided adaptation of cognitive-behavioral conjoint therapy (CBCT) for PTSD supported with coaching, to OurRelationship for the amelioration of PTSD symptoms in couples that include an active duty service member or veteran with probable PTSD (PI: Fredman). This study is being conducted in collaboration with colleagues from the STRONG STAR Consortium (University of Texas San Antonio), Candice Monson (Toronto Metropolitan University), Brian Doss (University of Miami), Annie Le (University of Denver), Tim Hoyt (DoD/DoW), and Shannon Wiltsey Stirman (Stanford).

Disclaimer: The Defense Health Agency Contracting Activity, 808 Schreider Street, Fort Detrick MD 21702-5014 is the awarding and administering acquisition office. This work was supported by The Assistant Secretary of Defense for Health Affairs endorsed by the Department of War, in the amount of $3,000,000, through the Department of Defense Broad Agency Announcement for Extramural Medical Research under Award No. HT9425261E473. Opinions, interpretations, conclusions, and recommendations are those of the author and are not necessarily endorsed by The Assistant Secretary of Defense for Health Affairs endorsed by the Department of War.

We're also continuing to recruit couples for our DoD/DoW-funded RCT to compare a weekend retreat version of CBCT for PTSD to the Prevention and Relationship Education Program (PREP) for the treatment of PTSD in active duty military and veteran couples (PI: Fredman). Treatment is being delivered in San Antonio as part of the STRONG STAR Consortium. Eligible couples from across the U.S. can come to San Antonio to receive treatment, and we're delighted that philanthropic funds are available to cover travel for couples coming from a distance.

Other work in the lab focuses on couple functioning and mental health on short time scales. Jeesun Lee is leading work on the link between relationship quality and mental health among adults at midlife, using both longitudinal and daily diary methods, and Ruoxuan Wang is leading work on the couple context of depression on short time scales.

<u>Kudos</u>

- Steffany Fredman was promoted to Professor of Human Development and Family Studies and Psychology at Penn State.



ABCT 2026 SIG SCHEDULE

Individual Oral Paper	Clinical Round Table
Poster Session	Symposia
IR SIG Events	Mini Workshop

Date & Time	Location	Presentation Type	Presentation Title	Presenters
Thursday, November 12th				
7:00pm - 9:00pm	**Peale B (First Floor), Hilton Baltimore Inner Harbor**	**Intimate Relationship SIG Pre-Conference: A Professional Matchmaking Event for Relationship Researchers**		
Friday, November 13th				
9:30 AM - 11:00 AM	342, Level 300, Convention Center	Symposia	Symposium 4 - Expanding Access to Compassionate and Evidence-Based Relationship Care: The Mechanisms, Predictors, and Economics of Digital Interventions for Distressed Couples	Chair: Judith Biesen, Ph.D. Discussant: Galena Rhoades, Ph.D. Presenter: Danielle Weber, Ph.D. Presenter: Judith Biesen, Ph.D. Presenter: Maya Metser-Waldman, M.S. Presenter: Brian Doss, Ph.D.
9:30 AM - 11:30 AM	Carroll A, Third Fl., Hilton	Individual Oral Paper	2 - (IOP30) Caught in the Mood: How Chronic Mood Relates to Daily Interpersonal Emotion Regulation and Well-being Outcomes in Romantic Dyads	Speaker: Daphne Y. Liu, Ph.D. Co-Author: Emily S. Bibby, M.A. Co-Author: Benjamin Eisenstadt, M.A. Co-Author: Stephan Brandt, Ph.D. Co-Author: Benjamin A. Swerdlow, Ph.D. Co-Author: Joanne Davila, Ph.D.
11:15 AM - 12:45 PM	Johnson B, First Fl., Hilton	Individual Oral Paper	2 - (IOP3) First, Do No Harm: Anticipating Safety Concerns in Couples Seeking Therapy	Speaker: Dev Crasta, Ph.D. Co-Author: Peter C. Britton, Ph.D. Co-Author: Stephen A. Maisto, Ph.D.
11:15 AM - 12:45 PM	340, Level 300, Convention Center	Clinical Round Table	Clinical Round Table 6 - Helping Couples Navigate a Challenging Sociopolitical Environment: Lessons Learned from the past Decade of Clinical Practice	Moderator: Danielle Weber, Ph.D. Moderator: Alexandra K. Wojda-Burlij, Ph.D. Presenter: Anthony L. Chambers, ABPP, Ph.D. Presenter: Mariana K. Falconier, Ph.D., MFT Presenter: Shawn C. Jones, Ph.D. Presenter: Katherine Lenger, Ph.D. Presenter: Sarah Whitton, Ph.D.
1:00 PM - 2:30 PM	**Johnson A, First Fl., Hilton**	**Intimate Relationship Research & Treatment SIG Business Meeting**		
2:45 PM - 3:45 PM	342, Level 300, Convention Center	Symposia	Symposium 19 - Relationship Distress as a Risk Factor for Depression: Explaining the How, Why, and When of a Robust Association	Chair: Melanie Fischer, Ph.D. Discussant: Sarah Whitton, Ph.D. Presenter: Ruoxuan Wang, M.A. Presenter: Danielle Weber, Ph.D. Presenter: Nina Winkelmann, M.S.
4:00 PM - 5:30 PM	342, Level 300, Convention Center	Trainee Symposia	Symposium 29 - Interpersonal Processes Across Diverse Romantic Relationship Contexts	Chair: Emily S. Bibby, M.A. Chair: Allison Tobar-Santamaria, M.S. Discussant: Sarah P. Carter, Ph.D. Presenter: Emily S. Bibby, M.A. Presenter: Larissa Brito, B.S. Presenter: Benjamin Eisenstadt, M.A. Presenter: Anne R. Vogel, M.S. Presenter: Marisa Alkalay, B.A.
6:00 PM - 8:30 PM	Holiday Ballroom, Second Fl., Hilton	**ABCT SIG Expo and Reception**		

ABCT 2026 SIG SCHEDULE

Individual Oral Paper	Clinical Round Table
Poster Session	Symposia
IR SIG Events	Mini Workshop

Date & Time	Location	Presentation Type	Presentation Title	Presenters
Saturday, November 14th				
9:30 AM - 11:30 AM	Tubman A/B, Third Fl., Hilton	Mini Workshop	Mini Workshop 9 - Coercive Control in Intimate Relationship	Speaker: Patti A. Timmons. Fritz, Ph.D.
9:30 AM - 11:30 AM	Tilghman, Third Fl., Hilton	Individual Oral Paper	1 - (IOP37) Relationship Satisfaction Among Transgender and Nonbinary Adults: An Evaluation of Individual, Dyadic, and Minority Stress Factors	Speaker: Shelby B. Scott, Ph.D. Co-Author: Harmony G. Huttegger, M.S. Co-Author: Casper Haight, B.A. Co-Author: Alexandra D. Graelles, B.A. Co-Author: Lex Pulice-Farrow, Ph.D. Co-Author: Kimberly F. Balsam, Ph.D.
9:30 AM - 11:30 AM	Tilghman, Third Fl., Hilton	Individual Oral Paper	2 - (IOP37) Support During Medical Transition: Comparing TGD Individuals' Needs and Romantic Partners' Perceptions	Speaker: Charlie Giraud, M.S. Co-Author: Jamie D. Hardy-Besaw, M.A. Co-Author: Shanna D. Stryker, M.P.H., M.D. Co-Author: Abby L. Fischbach, B.A. Co-Author: Mika Sevilla Morales Co-Author: Emily Devlin, M.A. Co-Author: Sarah Whitton, Ph.D.
9:30 AM - 11:30 AM	Tilghman, Third Fl., Hilton	Individual Oral Paper	3 - (IOP37) Neighborhood Disadvantage as a Risk for Intimate Partner Violence, Couple Marginalization, and Health Problems in Gender and Sexual Minorities Assigned Female at Birth	Speaker: Judith Biesen, Ph.D. Co-Author: August jenkins, D. Phil., M.S. Co-Author: Bennett Moscato, B.A. Co-Author: Sarah Whitton, Ph.D.
10:26 AM - 10:43 AM	340, Level 300, Convention Center	Symposia Talk	4 - (SYM38) Emotional and Relational Consequences of Daily Sociopolitical Stress Among Diverse U.S. Couples: A Dyadic Daily Diary Design	Speaker: Stephan Brandt, Ph.D. Co-Author: Emily S. Bibby, M.A. Co-Author: Daphne Liu, Ph.D. Co-Author: Joseph Hillesheim, M.A. Co-Author: Joanne Davila, Ph.D.
11:45 AM - 1:45 PM	Johnson B, First Fl., Hilton	Individual Oral Paper	4 - (IOP24) Does the Problem Matter? Treatment Outcomes Across Presenting Concerns in a Scalable Online Intervention for Low-income Couples	Speaker: Madeline Jubran, M.S. Co-Author: Emily Georgia, Ph.D. Co-Author: Brian D. Doss, Ph.D. Co-Author: Paula M. Brochu, Ph.D. Co-Author: Ashley Stripling, Ph.D.
1:00 PM - 2:30 PM	344, Level 300, Convention Center	Clinical Round Table	Clinical Round Table 11 - Innovations in the Delivery of Couple-Based Treatments for Individual Psychopathology: Clinical and Systems-Level Considerations	Moderator: Danielle Weber, Ph.D. Presenter: Steffany J. Fredman, Ph.D. Presenter: Melanie S. Fischer, Ph.D. Presenter: L. Jasmine Dobbs-Marsh, Psy.D. Presenter: Leslie Morland, Psy.D.
3:30 PM - 4:30 PM	Key Ballroom, Second Fl., Hilton	**Poster Session: Couple/Close Relationship Posters**		
6:15pm - 8:15pm	**Liv's Tavern**	**IR SIG Happy Hour -- Come for Snacks and Drinks!**		
Sunday, November 15th				
12:11 PM - 12:28 PM	Johnson A&B, First Fl., Hilton	Individual Oral Paper	4 - (SYM70) Trajectories of Change in PTSD and Relationship Functioning During Mdma-assisted Cognitive-behavioral Conjoint Therapy	Speaker: Kayla Knopp, Ph.D. Co-Author: Chandra Estelle Khalifian, PhD Co-Author: Leslie Morland, Psy.D.

OPPORTUNITIES

Call for Papers: Entitled "Lessons learned from conducting research with LGBTQIA+ families" for a Special Issue of LGBTQ+ Family: An Interdisciplinary Journal. The Special Issue will bring together essays on lessons learned from conducting research on LGBTQIA+ relationships and families and is edited by Prof. Pamela J. Lannutti and Dr. Magdalena Siegel. Abstract submissions are possible until **November 16**, **2026**. https://think.taylorandfrancis.com/special_issues/lessons-learned-conducting-research-lgbtq-families/

Submitted by: Dr. Melanie Fischer, Clinical Couple and Family Psychology, Dept. of Psychology, University of Marburg, Germany

Post-Doctoral Fellowship: The CLOSE lab is currently seeking a postdoctoral fellow to join our team! Position description and application information can be found at:

https://utah.peopleadmin.com/postings/209368

Submitted by: Dr. Brian Baucom, Dept. of Psychology, University of Utah

Post-Doctoral Fellowships: The Institute for Relationship Science recently received funding for a new National Center for Work, Economic Mobility, and Strong Families from the Administration for Children and Families and they are excited to get to work on hiring 10 post-doctoral fellows who will be in residence at HHS offices in Washington, D.C. and also in awarding extramural grants to other institutions. If you are interested in learning more, please reach out to galena.rhoades@du.edu.

Submitted by: Drs. Galena Rhoades, Scott Stanley, Nicholas Perry, & Annie (Yunying) Le, University of Denver

OPPORTUNITIES

Post-Doctoral Fellowship: The Crasta Lab will be taking on a postdoctoral fellow supported by VA's Advanced Fellowship Program in Mental Illness Research and Treatment. Fellows spend approximately 75% of their time in research and 25% in related clinical activities (e.g., training in IBCT; Strength at Home for IPV). Research activities will include access to the projects mentioned in our Lab Update as well as previous trials where Dev has led analyses including:

- An N=299 survey of partnered Veterans engaged in VHA primary care mental health (MPI: Trabold & Crane)
- An evaluation of N=107 calls by family/friends to the Veterans Crisis Line linked to the charts of the Veteran of Concern (PI: Britton)
- An N=39 dyad RCT of family-oriented safety planning (PI: Goodman)
- An N=20 dyad pilot of James Cordova's Checkup (PI: Crasta)
- Finally, COE-SP also has competitive internal pilot funding mechanism.

To apply for the program through COE-SP, please provide the materials listed on our fellowship website by **Monday, November 16, 2026:** https://www.mirecc.va.gov/MIRECC/suicideprevention/Education/fellowship.asp

If you have any questions, contact Dev Crasta at Dev.Crasta@va.gov or connect with him at the 2026 ABCT Convention in Baltimore.

Staff Psychologist: FACET (Family and Couple Enrichment Team) at the James A. Haley Veterans' Hospital in Tampa, FL. is hiring a psychologist with experience in couple and family theory and practice. FACET is a specialty clinic serving the Tampa Bay area with over 13 staff members dedicated specifically to treating couple and family concerns. Graduating interns and postdocs are welcome to apply. Please reach out to the Team Lead (Maggie.parker@va.gov) if interested in the position. Interested candidates can send a letter of interest and CV directly to Ronald.Gironda@va.gov

HOT OFF THE PRESS

1. Andrews, A., Christensen, S. S., Lubeznik-Warner, R. P. (2026). Enhancing mental health screening practices for adolescents with phenylketonuria: A quality improvement initiative. Journal of the American Association of Nurse Practitioners. 38(6), p. 459–468. https://doi.org/10.1097/JXX.0000000000001234

2. Barden, E. P., Fernando, M., Fredman, S. J., & Thompson-Hollands, J. (2026). A systematic review of trauma disclosure behaviors to informal support sources. *Clinical Psychology: Science and Practice*. Advance online publication. https://doi.org/10.1037/cps0000374

3. Bothwell, S.J., Newcomb, M.E., Whitton S.W. (2026). Young sexual and gender minority intimate partner violence survivors' preferences for tailored prevention programs. Couple and Relationship Therapy, 25(3), 235-255.

4. Chapman, C. L., Liu, D. L., Stanley, S. M., & Rhoades, G. K. (in press). Thinking about moving in together? Reasons for cohabitation are associated with relationship outcomes over time. Couple and Family Psychology: Research and Practice.

5. Christensen, S. S., Lubeznik-Warner, R. P., Byon, H. D., Hansen, S. D., Tiase, V., & Wilson, B. (2026). Measuring barriers to reporting adverse safety and behavioral event: Development and psychometric evaluation of the REPORT Scale. Journal of Advanced Nursing. https://doi.org/10.1111/jan.70722

6. Dunning, E. D., Shenk, C. E., Fisher, Z. F., Fredman, S. J., & Felt, J. M. (2026). Variation in early-life maltreatment effects on adolescent psychopathology due to contamination. *Journal of Traumatic Stress, 39*, 801–812. https://doi.org/10.1002/jts.70076

7. Feinstein, B. A., Swann, G., Godfrey, L., Crosby, S., Dyar, C., Mustanski, B., Newcomb, M. E., & Whitton, S. W. (2026). Heterogeneity in sexual identity development among young sexual minority women: Associates with outness, victimization, and health. Psychology of Sexual Orientation and Gender Diversity. Advance online publication. https://doi.org/10.1037/sgd0000931.

8. Fredman, S. J., Thompson-Hollands, J., Knopp, K. C., Le, Y., Monson, C. M., & Morland, L. A. (in press). Changes in partner accommodation of PTSD symptoms following brief couple therapy for PTSD. *European Journal of Psychotraumatology*. https://doi.org/10.1080/20008066.2026.2752719s

9. Gates, M. V., & Balderrama-Durbin, C. (in press). Internalized stigma mediates the association between sexual and gender minority adverse childhood experiences and positive romantic relationship functioning among sexual minority couples. LGBTQ+ Family: An Interdisciplinary Journal. Advanced online publication. https://doi.org/10.1080/27703371.2026.2667176

10. Gates, M. V., Smith, R. L., League, R., Sleight, F., Young, S., Scott, S., & Balderrama-Durbin, C. (in press). We are the "Political Football": Lived Experiences of Sexual and Gender Minority Women in the 2025 Sociopolitical Landscape. LGBTQ+ Family: An Interdisciplinary Journal. Advanced online publication. doi: 10.1080/27703371.2026.2732978

HOT OFF THE PRESS

11. Gates, M. V., Sullivan, T. J., Mattson, R. E., Young, S., Massey, S., Balderrama-Durbin, C. (in press). Explicating the direct and indirect effects of minority stress on physical violence perpetration among same- and different-gender lesbian, gay, and bisexual couples. Psychology of Sexual Orientation and Gender Diversity. Advanced online publication.

12. Giraud, C., Stryker, S., Besaw, J., & Whitton, S.W. (2025). Navigating a romantic partner's medical gender transition. Family Process 64, no. 4: e70098. https://doi.org/10.1111/famp.70098.

13. Hendershot, Q.E., Aizaga, K., Polo, A.J., Kirschen, B., & Johnson, M.D. (in press). Two sides of the same coin: Spanish translations of the Perceived Responses to Capitalization Attempts Scale and Kessler's Perceived Social Support Scale. Personal Relationships.

14. Hendershot, Q.E., Fivecoat, H.C., & Johnson, M.D. (in press). Understanding the role of culture in shaping relationship quality for Latinx couples: Support for the Dyadic Cultural Competence and Balance Model. Journal of Latinx Psychology.

15. Hendershot, Q.E., Fivecoat, H.C., & Johnson, M.D. (in press). Dyadic bicultural competence is a protective factor reducing partner violence risk for Latine couples. Violence Against Women.

16. Hill, J. E., Gates, M. V., Barden, E. P., & Balderrama-Durbin, C. (in press). Exploring timing of first sexual victimization and adult romantic relationship functioning: A brief report. Couple and Family Psychology: Research and Practice.

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19. Le, Y., Lee, J., Liu, D. Y., Perry, N. S. & Rhoades, G. K. (in press). Does sociodemographic disadvantage moderate the impact of MotherWise? Findings from a randomized controlled trial. Journal of Family Psychology.

20. Liu, D. Y., Chapman, C. L., Le, Y., Perry, N. S., & Rhoades, G. K. (2026). Change in relationship status and internalizing symptoms among adolescents: Testing bidirectionality and moderation by sexual orientation, gender, and age. Journal of research on adolescence : the official journal of the Society for Research on Adolescence, 36(1), e70147. https://doi.org/10.1111/jora.70147

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23. Povilaitis, V., Lubeznik-Warner, R. P., *Zylak, C., & Wycoff, T. (2026). Using creative methods to elevate youth voice to understand why youth from low-income backgrounds return and do not return to camp. Journal of Multidisciplinary Evaluation, 22(52), 54–64.

24. Sevilla Morales, M., Giraud, C., Newcomb, M.E., Whitton, S.W. (2026). Racial Differences in Mental Health among Sexual and Gender Minority Individuals. Psychology & Sexuality.,1–16. https://doi.org/10.1080/19419899.2026.2647297

25. Smith Slep, A. M., Lober, M. F., Hill, J. E., Balderrama-Durbin, C., Cigrang, J. A., Heyman, R. E., Snyder, D. K., Lapshina, N., Mitnick, D. M., & Eckardt, A. (in press). Identifying partnered service members at risk for negative relationship outcomes, Military Psychology. Advanced online publication. doi: 10.1080/08995605.2026.2690323

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AND WHAT BROUGHT YOU BOTH TO COUPLES THERAPY TODAY?
HE'S TOO LITERAL
AN UBER
LYNCH