

Rachael M. Cavallaro

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Academic Positions

September 2026 Assistant Professor of Psychology, Springfield College

Education

August 2026 **Ph.D. Experimental Psychology, University of Mississippi (UM)**
Social Psychology Concentration
Interdisciplinary Graduate Minor in Applied Statistics
Advisor: Dr. Grace N. Rivera
Dissertation: *Self-Enhancement and Self-Improvement on Perceived Authenticity: The Role of Cultural Value Alignment*

August 2022 **M.A. Experimental Psychology, University of Mississippi (UM)**
Social Psychology Concentration
Advisor: Dr. Grace N. Rivera
Thesis: *The Self-Compassionate Side of Awe: The Relationship Between Awe and Self-Compassion via Self-Diminishment and Connectedness*

May 2017 **B.A. Psychology, Binghamton University: State University of New York (SUNY)**
Honors: summa cum laude
Phi Eta Sigma Honors Society for Academic Excellence in College Freshman
Advisor: Dr. Ann Merriwether
Honors Thesis: *Fat Girls Can Have Fun Too: The Various Relationships between Body Appreciation, Body-Mass-Index, and Sexual Satisfaction*

Publications

* Indicates Undergraduate Mentee Under my Mentorship

- Rivera, G. N., Church, M.H., **Cavallaro, R.M.**, Jongman-Serreno, K., Searle, H., Kim, J., Kelley, N., Schlegel, R. J., & Hicks, J. (2026). How do I know you're real? Lay Predictors of Others Authenticity. *Self and Identity*.
- Cavallaro, R.M.**, George, T. & Rivera, G.N (2026). Seeing I to I Makes Sparks Fly: A Daily Diary Study Investigating I-Sharing and Relationship Quality. *Journal of Social and Personal Relationships*.
- Cavallaro, R.M.**, & Rivera, G.N. (2025). Feeling Small but Still Connected: Examining Complex Effects of Awe on Self-Compassion. *Current Psychology*. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s12144-025-07706-1>
- Cavallaro, R.M.**, & Church, M.H., *Giddens, B.J., & Rivera, G.N. (2025). The Complex Effects of Awe on Meaning in Life and True Self Knowledge. *Self and Identity*, 1-28. <https://doi.org/10.1080/15298868.2025.2458844>

Manuscripts In Preparation

- Church, M.H., **Cavallaro, R. M.**, Rivera, G. N., Garrison, K. E., & Schlegel, R. J., Perceived use of true-self-as-guide and decision satisfaction in self-control conflicts.
- Cavallaro, R.M.**, Rios, J.L., *Booker, B., & Rivera, G. N. Self-Presentation and Dark Personality on Perceived Authenticity.
- *Booker, B., *Bonds, D.J., Church, M.H., **Cavallaro, R. M.**, & Rivera, G.N. Perceived Authenticity and Identity Reconstruction Among First-Generation Immigrants: The Impact of Exclusion from Heritage and Host Communities.

- **Cavallaro, R. M.** A Comprehensive Review of Common Eudaimonic Well-being Operationalizations.
- Rivera, G. N., **Cavallaro, R. M.**, & Church, M.H. Honesty and Moral Intentions Shape Perceptions of Authenticity.
- **Cavallaro, R. M.**, Bryan, V. M. & Mayer, J. D. A Review and Evaluation of an Open-Source Mood Assessment, the Brief Mood Introspection Scale.

Encyclopedia Publications

- Mayer, J. D., **Cavallaro, R. M.**, & Bryan, V. M. (2025). Mood Measures. In Friedman-Wheeler D. G., & Wenzel, A.E. The Sage Encyclopedia of Mood and Anxiety Disorders, SAGE Publications, Inc.

Manuals

- Mayer, J. D., & **Cavallaro, R. M.** (2019). Brief Mood Introspection Scale (BMIS): Technical and scoring manual.

Teaching Experience

Fall 2026	Instructor of Record, Springfield College PSYC 209: Social Psychology PSYC 301-01: Research Methods PSYC 309: Motivation and Learning
Fall 2025 – Spring 2026	Instructor of Record, University of Mississippi PSYC 231 Online: Social Psychology
Fall 2024 Fall 2022 - Fall 2023	Instructor of Record, University of Mississippi PSYC 201: Introduction to Psychology
Fall 2021 - Spring 2022	Lab Instructor, University of Mississippi PSYC 205: Research Methods
Fall 2025 – Spring 2026 Fall 2022 – Fall 2024 Fall 2020 – Spring 2021	Graduate Teaching Assistant, University of Mississippi PSYC 301 Online: Developmental Psychology PSYC 320: Cognitive Psychology PSYC 201: Introduction to Psychology

Undergraduate Student Mentoring

Sep 2022 – August 2026	Graduate Mentor of Undergraduate Research Projects, University of Mississippi • Supervised over 15 undergraduate students throughout the entire research process on seven independent projects – either in small groups or individually • Advised two undergraduates in the submission of the Spring 2025 UM STAMPS Impact Grant to cover expenses for their independent research projects, in which one mentee won the \$5,000 grant • Published peer-reviewed article with undergraduate mentee as co-author (Cavallaro et al., 2025) • Guided one undergraduate in the submission of the Social Sciences Undergraduate Conference 2024 Travel Grant • Advised in creation of several conference posters on independent projects, in which one pair of my mentees won best research poster at the 2023 UM research day conference • Mentored students in developing research questions and hypotheses through both analysis of existing datasets and creation of original methodologies for independent data collection projects
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- Aided students to develop their own quantitative (e.g., correlational, experimental) and qualitative (e.g., thematic analysis) methodologies
 - Guided students through statistical analyses (e.g., multiple regressions, parallel mediations, repeated measures three-way interactions) and facilitated the interpretation of results
- Aug 2020 - Aug 2026 **Laboratory Research Mentor to Undergraduates, University of Mississippi**
- Independently and co-led several undergraduate lab meetings; including organizing career development events, along with curated articles and facilitating discussions for the undergraduate journal club.
 - Trained undergraduates in participant management and data collection methods, syntax coding in SPSS, and conducting literature searches.
 - Crafted weekly emails to update undergraduates on lab activities and tasks.
- Sep 2023 - May 2024 **Graduate Honors Thesis Mentor, University of Mississippi**
- Provided comprehensive instruction to an honors student on all aspects of their honors thesis, from initial conceptualization of the research idea to editing and reviewing the final paper and presentation.
 - Offered continuous, personalized feedback, highlighting the student's strengths while providing constructive criticism to enhance their skills.
- Aug 2019 - May 2020 **Laboratory Research Mentor to Undergraduates, University of New Hampshire**
- Managed the only undergraduate assistant in the Personality Laboratory.
 - Advised the student in the construction of the supplemental material for a meta-analysis.
 - Trained the undergraduate in SPSS through the use of syntax.

Research Experience

- Aug 2020 - Aug 2026 **Lay Beliefs and Culture Lab Graduate Research Assistant, University of Mississippi**
Dr. Grace Rivera
Aided with two multidisciplinary grants with the Philosophy Department at UM. Assisted in designing, programming, and analyzing studies while developing proficiency in statistical and methodological techniques. Gained topical expertise in existential and cultural psychology, authenticity, psychology of the self, and well-being research areas.
- June 2017 - Aug 2020
June 2016 - Aug 2016
June 2015 - Aug 2015 **Personality Laboratory, University of New Hampshire**
Dr. John Mayer
Co-authored encyclopedia entry about mood scales. Led a meta-analysis on the psychometric properties of the Brief Mood Introspection Scale (BMIS), performing all statistical analyses in R. Collaborated with Dr. John Mayer to develop new BMIS scoring equations and co-authored an updated technical manual.
- January 2015 - May 2017 **Interdisciplinary Research Group for the Study of Sexuality, Binghamton University (SUNY)**
Dr. Ann Merriwether, Dr. Sean Massey & Dr. Susan Seibold-Simpson
Conducted an honors thesis and co-led qualitative research projects about barriers and facilitators of abortion and parodies of sexual and violent music videos. Independently developed qualitative coding manuals and established project management expertise by leading a team of 30 members.
- June 2015 - Aug 2015
July 2014 - Aug 2014 **Developmental Psychology Lab, University of New Hampshire**
Dr. Michelle Leichtman
Administered structured interviews to kindergartners about a science lesson on plant biology and coded similar transcripts for the presence of children's recall of scientific concepts.
- June 2014 - Aug 2014 **Developmental Psychology and Memory Lab, University of New Hampshire**
Dr. David Pillemer

Transcribed the vicarious memories of 30 participants, along with coding the level of bitter-sweetness and categorized the memories of elderly adults.

Conference Presentations

† Indicates Presenting Author(s) * Indicates Undergraduate Mentee Under my Mentorship

- †*Booker, B., *Sprague, C., *Srivastava, S., Church, M.H., **Cavallaro, R. M.**, & Rivera, G.N. (2026, March). The Impact of Stereotype Threat on Christian Women in STEM. Poster presented at Southeastern Psychological Association Conference (SEPA), New Orleans, LA.
- †**Cavallaro, R. M.**, Long, J. W. R., *Bonds D.J., & Rivera, G. N. (2026, February). Self-Presentation and Dark Personality on Perceived Authenticity (Three Study Package). Poster presented at Society for Personality and Social Psychology International Conference (SPSP), Chicago, IL.
- Rivera, G. N., Mower, D., Oakes, N., Church, M.H., †Jackson, K., & **Cavallaro, R. M.** (2026, February). Fostering Virtues Through Discussion of Moral Dilemmas. Poster presented at Society for Personality and Social Psychology International Conference (SPSP), Chicago, IL.
- †*Bonds D.J., *Davis M.R., *Myers C. W., **Cavallaro, R. M.**, & Rivera, G. N. (2025, April). Self-Presentation and Dark Personality on Perceived Authenticity Follow-up. Poster presented at University of Mississippi Conference on Psychological Science, Oxford, MS.
- †**Cavallaro, R.M.**, & Church, M.H., *Giddens, B.J., & Rivera, G.N. (2024, November). The Complex Effects of Awe on Meaning in Life and True Self Knowledge. Data Blitz presented at the Society of Southeastern Social Psychologists (SSSP), Memphis, TN.
- Rivera, G. N., †Church, M.H., **Cavallaro, R.M.**, Jongman-Serreno, K., Kelley, N., Kim, J., & Schlegel, R. J. (2024, November). How do I know you're real? Lay Predictors of Others' Authenticity. Single Presenter Talk presented at the Society of Southeastern Social Psychologists (SSSP), Memphis, TN.
- *McCloud, B.C., †*Bonds D.J., *Squire, K., **Cavallaro, R. M.**, & Rivera, G. N. (2024, November). Self-Presentation and Dark Personality on Perceived Authenticity. Poster presented at the Society of Southeastern Social Psychologists (SSSP), Memphis, TN.
- †*Morse, C.M., *Tse, R.M., **Cavallaro, R. M.**, & Rivera, G. N. (2024, November). Achieving Personal Growth: An Analysis of Self-Relevant Predictors. Poster presented at the Society of Southeastern Social Psychologists (SSSP), Memphis, TN.
- †**Cavallaro, R.M.**, & Church, M.H., *Giddens, B.J., & Rivera, G.N. (2024, April). The Complex Effects of Awe on Meaning in Life and True Self Knowledge. Data Blitz presented at University of Mississippi Conference on Psychological Science, Oxford, MS.
- Rivera, G. N., †Church, M.H., **Cavallaro, R.M.**, Jongman-Serreno, K., Kelley, N., Kim, J., & Schlegel, R. J. (2024, February). How do I know you're real? Lay Predictors of Others' Authenticity. Data Blitz presented at University of Mississippi Conference on Psychological Science, Oxford, MS.
- †*McCloud, B.C., †*Bonds D.J., †*Squire, K., **Cavallaro, R. M.**, & Rivera, G. N. (2024, April). Self-Presentation and Dark Personality on Perceived Authenticity. Poster presented at University of Mississippi Conference on Psychological Science, Oxford, MS.
- †*Morse, C.M., †*Tse, R.M., **Cavallaro, R. M.**, & Rivera, G. N. (2024, April). Achieving Personal Growth: An Analysis of Self-Relevant Predictors. Poster presented at University of Mississippi Conference on Psychological Science, Oxford, MS.
- †**Cavallaro, R.M.**, & Church, M.H., *Giddens, B.J., & Rivera, G.N. (2024, February). The Complex Effects of Awe on Meaning in Life and True Self Knowledge. Poster presented at Society for Personality and Social Psychology International Conference (SPSP), San Diego, CA.
- Rivera, G. N., †Church, M. H., **Cavallaro, R. M.**, Schlegel, R. J. (2024, February). How do I know you're real? Lay Predictors of Others' Authenticity. Poster presented at Society for Personality and Social Psychology (SPSP), San Diego, CA.

- †Cavallaro, R.M., & Rivera, G.N. (2023, April). Seeing I to I Makes Sparks Fly: A Daily Diary Study Investigating I-Sharing and Relationship Quality. Data Blitz presented at University of Mississippi Conference on Psychological Science, Oxford, MS.
- †*Giddens, B.J., †*Leake D., *Bass, A., *Samaniego Mata, N., Cavallaro, R.M., & Rivera, G.N. (2023, April). Awe and Existential Matters. Poster presented at University of Mississippi Conference on Psychological Science, Oxford, MS [Poster Winner].
- †Cavallaro, R.M., & Rivera, G.N. (2023, February). Seeing I to I Makes Sparks Fly: A Daily Diary Study Investigating I-Sharing and Relationship Quality. Poster presented at Society for Personality and Social Psychology International Conference (SPSP), Atlanta, GA.
- †*Giddens, B.J., *Leake D., *Bass, A., *Samaniego Mata, N., Cavallaro, R.M., & Rivera, G.N. (2023, February). Awe and Existential Matters. Poster presented at Society for Personality and Social Psychology International Conference (SPSP), Atlanta, GA.
- †Cavallaro, R.M., & Rivera, G.N. (2022, April). The Self-Compassionate Side of Awe: The Relationship between Awe and Self-Compassion via Self-Diminishment and Connectedness. Data Blitz presented at University of Mississippi Conference on Psychological Science, Oxford, MS.
- †Cavallaro, R.M., & Rivera, G.N. (2022, February). The Self-Compassionate Side of Awe: The Relationship between Awe and Self-Compassion via Self-Diminishment and Connectedness. Poster presented at Society for Personality and Social Psychology International Conference (SPSP), San Francisco, CA.
- †Cavallaro, R.M., Bryan, V.M. & Mayer, J.D (2021, February). *A Review and Evaluation of an Open-Source Mood Assessment: The Brief Mood Introspection Scale*. Poster presented at Society for Personality and Social Psychology International Conference (SPSP), Virtual.
- †Cavallaro, R.M., Bryan, V.M. & Mayer, J.D (2019, June). *The Brief Mood Introspection Scale (BMIS) 30 Years Later: Norms and Validity Evidence from a Meta-Analysis*. Poster presented at Association of Research in Personality (ARP), Grand Rapids MI.
- †Cavallaro, R.M. (2017, May). *Fat Girls Can Have Fun Too: The Various Relationships between Body Appreciation, Body-Mass-Index and Sexual Satisfaction*. Poster presented at Psi Chi International Honors Society in Psychology Poster Presentation, Binghamton University, Vestal NY.
- †Cavallaro, R.M., †Ferenchak, S., & †Portnoy, S. (2016, May). *Planned Behavior: Abortion Barriers and Facilitators*. Psi Chi International Honors Society in Psychology Poster Presentation, Binghamton University, Vestal NY.
- †Sortino, C., †Koo, S.L., †Cavallaro, R.M., & †Lombardi, D. (2015, May). *Combating Violence and Objectification in Music Videos: Visual Exaggeration and Misdirection in Parodies*. Poster presented at Psi Chi International Honors Society in Psychology Poster Presentation, Binghamton University, Vestal NY.

Fellowships, Honors, and Awards

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| 2021 – 2026 | • University of Mississippi Psychology Department Travel Grant |
| 2020 – 2025 | • Excellence in Inclusivity Recruitment Fellowship at the University of Mississippi |
| 2017 | • Distinguished Independent Work in Psychology at Binghamton University (SUNY) |

Departmental Service

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| Sep 2023 - Present | • Review Undergraduates' Graduate School Application Materials |
| Feb 2021 – Feb 2026 | • Participated in Q&A Panels during the Virtual & In-person UM Psychology Graduate Student Interviews |
| Aug 2024 - Aug 2025 | • Member of the UM Psychology Graduate Student Council |
| April 2025 | • Judged undergraduate research posters at the UM psychology research conference |

- April 2022, 2023, & 2025
- March 2024
- November 2021, 2023, & 2024
- Volunteered to co-run Lay Beliefs and Culture Lab Booth at UM Mississippi Day
- Judged 1st Grade Psychology Science Projects at the MS Region VII Science Fair
- Presented Recruitment Synopses about the Lay Beliefs and Culture Lab at the Psi Chi and Psychology Club Research Lab Panel to Undergraduates Interested in Research

Additional Training and Experience

- May 2025
 - Online Teaching and Artificial Intelligence (AI) in the Classroom, UM Psychology Department
 - 2-hour workshop discussing strategies for teaching online and handling AI in the classroom with Drs. Rebekah Smith and Kate Kellum
- February 2025
 - Online Teaching Endorsement Certificate, UM Office of Academic Outreach
 - 4-hour online course teaching information and skills needed to teach effectively online
- Sep 2024 - Oct 2024
 - Speech Training, University of Mississippi Speaking Center
 - 2 1-hour training sessions to enhance speaking skills while teaching with Dr. Elizabeth Moore
- August 2024
 - Motivation Myth Busters: Cracking the Code to Motivating First Year Students, APA
 - 1.5-hour webinar with Drs. Wendy S. Grolnick, Benjamin Heddy, and Frank C. Worrell
- April 2023
 - An Introduction to Missing Data Analyses, APA
 - 1.5-hour virtual workshop with Dr. Craig Enders
- July - August 2022
 - Teaching Workshop Series, UM Psychology Department
 - 3-day workshop discussing policies such as student disability accommodations and Title IX
- May 2022
 - Introduction to Structural Equation Modeling, Central Stats
 - A 3-day virtual workshop ran by Drs. Dan Bauer and Patrick Curran
- March 2015 - Sep 2016
 - Psychology Peer Advisor at Binghamton University (SUNY)
 - Advised psychology undergraduates, in-person and through email, on department requirements, schedule planning, course registration, and major declaration
 - Co-created events such as psychology graduate student Q&A panels for undergraduates
 - Created several forms that were available to students on the psychology department advising webpage describing information and procedures such as how to transfer credits and FAQ about waitlists

Ad Hoc Reviewer

- Sep 2026
 - *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin*
- Sep & Oct 2025
 - *Utilizing the Emotion of Awe in Pedagogy for Enhanced Learning*
- April & August 2025
 - *Current Psychology*
- November 2023
 - *Emotion* co-reviewer with Dr. Grace Rivera
- July 2023
 - *Current Psychology*
- Sep & Dec 2020
 - *Personality and Individual Differences* co-reviewer with Dr. Carrie Smith

Professional Affiliations

- American Psychological Association
- Society of Southeastern Social Psychologists
- Society for Personality and Social Psychology

- Psi Chi International Honor Society in Psychology

Technical Skills

- **Programming Languages**
 - Expertise in SPSS
 - Experience in R
- **Tools & Experience**
 - Qualtrics
 - Prolific
 - SONA
 - Microsoft Office
 - IRB Application Procedure
 - Blackboard Ultra
 - Panopto
 - CITI
 - Zoom
- **Statistical Analytic Methods**
 - Multilevel Modeling (MLM)
 - Meta-Analysis
 - Factor Analysis
 - Generalized Linear Models
 - General Linear Models