

SOAR Proposal Summer 2015

Faculty: Stacey B. Zaremba, Professor of Psychology

Students: Elizabeth Nielsen, Psychology Major
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Project Descriptions

Study One: Shyness, Loneliness, and Locus of Control as Predictors of Gaming Use

Video gaming is one of the fastest forms of addiction, especially among teenagers and young adults. It is estimated that over 5 million young adults are addicted to video games, specifically Massive Multi-user Online Role-Playing Games (MMORPG.s) such as *World of Warcraft*. Gaming can have detrimental effects equivalent to those associated with drugs, or alcohol or gambling. I have been conducting research on gaming use as it relates to various personality characteristics such as shyness, loneliness, and locus of control. These variables were selected because they were thought to be potential predictors of video game addiction. Data was collected in the spring of 2013 from a sample of 95 Moravian College students and it was found that only a small portion of that sample (8 participants) were heavy users. This made it impossible to make the data analysis meaningful. I am currently working to expand the subject pool beyond the Moravian College community. I have taken the survey packet and put it onto Survey Monkey and the next step will be to administer the survey to gamers via their gaming guilds. I also plan to take hard copies of the survey packets to game stores and administer the survey's that way as well.

Study Two: The Effects of Gaming on Social Relations On and Off-Line

MMORPGs are by nature interactive social environments that facilitate friendships and connections between players. It has been suggested that shy gamers may feel more comfortable expressing themselves on-line than they do in their "real" life. This second study will investigate the effects of gaming on real-life relationships. I will work with Elizabeth and Anwar to design a study to investigate the effects of gaming on the quality of on-line and off-line friendships. We will be certain to include a gender analysis in this study as well because very little research has been conducted on female gamers.

Gaming Addiction Awareness Project

The video game industry targets young adults. Currently there are no gaming prevention programs designed to educate young people about the risks associated with excessive gaming. Given the serious consequences associated with heavy gaming use and addiction Elizabeth, Anwar and I decided to develop a Gaming Addiction Awareness Program. This program will model successful prevention programs used for drug and alcohol prevention by incorporating aspects of those programs that would work well for gaming addiction in young adults.

Roles and responsibilities of the students

Study One:

- Data Collection –Anwar and Elizabeth will assist in the data collection process. They will help to distribute the survey packets to gamers. I have already established contacts with several guilds and local game stores.
- Data Analysis – the students will be responsible for inputting the data into SPSS. They will work with me to run the appropriate statistical tests to analyze the data.
- Empirical Paper- the students will work together to write up an empirical paper based upon the results of the research. We will submit the findings of this work at the Annual Meeting of the Eastern Psychological Association, 2015.

Study Two:

- Conduct a literature review – the students will read primary sources and maintain a log of findings on the topic. This is a very important first step for the students' as this will set the stage for the design of the study.
- Students will write the HSIRB for the study.
- Elizabeth and Anwar will be responsible for data collection and analysis.
- Work together to co-author an article. The students will work together to create a submission for Scholars day and the LVAIC Undergraduate Psychology Conference Spring of 2015.

Gaming Addiction Awareness Project

- Conduct a literature review on young adults as the vulnerable population.
- Review quality and effective prevention programs for other addictions.
- Design a Gaming Addiction Awareness Project based on the material obtained in the reviews.

Proposed Timetable and Milestones

The tasks below represent the main tasks that the students will be working on over the course of the ten weeks. I will meet with them 2-3 times a week to supervise their work and provide direction on the projects. Neither of the students requires housing and one of the students will be away for the month of July. We have all agreed to begin to work together in May and June and then wrap up the first two weeks of August.

Week 1-3

- Begin the background research on Study Two: Gaming and Social Relations topic to provide a foundational understanding of the literature.
- Continue data collection for Study One: Shyness, Loneliness, and Locus of Control as Predictors of Gaming Use.
- Begin to review the literature on young adults at risk for gaming addiction.
- Investigate prevention programs for other behavioral addictions.

Weeks 4-7

- Design Study Two and compile the survey packet needed to administer to the gamers. Construct and submit the HSIRB.
- Analyze the data from Study One and begin to write up the results and discussion section for publication. The introduction and methods section have already been written.
- Begin data collection for study two – input data into SPSS as it comes in.
- Students will begin to write the introduction of the paper for Study Two.
- Begin to construct the Gaming Addiction Awareness Program.

Weeks 8-10

- Continue to work on manuscript for Study One.
- Continue to work on the Begin data collection for study two – input data into SPSS as it comes in.
- Work on their submissions for Scholars day and the Undergraduate conference.
- Submit final report on Summer SOAR project to Dr. Coleman.

Benefits to the students

This SOAR project will provide Anwar and Elizabeth with extensive experience in data analysis and research design. Working on the manuscripts is likely to strengthen their writing skills. Anwar is currently working with me on Study One as part of an independent research project this term. This SOAR project would allow Anwar to continue this line of work with me into the summer months.

It would also allow Anwar to mentor Elizabeth as she becomes the newest member of our research team. Elizabeth is currently enrolled in my PS 212 class and she proposed doing an experiment on video game use and aggression. She is very interested in the topic and I believe the three of us would make a very good team. I will also benefit from the SOAR grant. Without the full-time assistance of hardworking students, I could not complete the three projects described above.

Budget

Request for **\$500** to support this SOAR application.

The money will be used to purchase books and/or manuals that will be critical for this project. In addition the money will be used to reimburse expenses for traveling to game stores to administer the survey packets. Lastly, the money will be used to support the prevention/awareness program that we develop. This program may require printed material and/or handouts.

Student Statement of Purpose

Shyness, Loneliness, and Locus of Control as Predictors of Gaming Use and The Effects of Gaming on Social Relations On and Off-Line

Student: Elizabeth Nielsen Major: Psychology Expected Date of Graduation: May, 2015 Faculty Mentor: Dr. Stacey B. Zaremba Request for On-campus Housing: No

I would like to participate in the SOAR program this summer for various reasons. One reason being, that it will help strengthen my knowledge and skills in regards to research design and data analysis. Conducting research and analyzing data is something that is very important in the field of psychology and I believe that working on this project with Dr. Zaremba will provide greater insight into this area for me. Not only that, but I will also have the courtesy of working with another student, Anwar. This will offer the opportunity of working on a project with a small group of people allowing for collaboration, teamwork, and different perspectives. By working together each person can gain insight and knowledge from one another and because Anwar has already conducted some research with Dr. Zaremba, it offers a great opportunity for him to act as more of a mentor in the first project we are working on which would be beneficial for both of us.

To further explain my reasoning for wanting to participate in SOAR, I will go on to say that I plan on attending graduate school and I believe that this experience will help me adequately prepare for this. Some of the things I will be doing that will help prepare for graduate school include; collecting data, analyzing data, putting data into SPSS, research design, and composing and submitting to the HSIRB. Although I have already some of these things in psychology 211 and 212, it will help reinforce what I have learned because the more you do something the better your skills become at it. Therefore, I hope to take what I have learned from psychology 211 and 212 and apply it to this project as well as

continue to learn new things that will supplement this to further expand my knowledge and skills to help me in the future. At this point in time I am not completely sure what area of psychology I would like to focus on in graduate school and this program may help assist me in that.

To conclude, I would also like to partake in this program because it will not only help me in regards to gaining knowledge in the area of research design, among many other things, but prepare me for meetings and presentations with various people, groups, and organizations.

SOAR offers opportunities that extend beyond the classroom. It is one thing to present information in our various classes as our professors and mentors have done a great job in preparing us for. However, to take it to the next level and to be able to submit or present our work at various conferences, such as the LVAIC Undergraduate Psychology Conference and the Annual Meeting of the Eastern Psychological Association is something that would offer a great experience and would be greatly beneficial. It is great opportunities such as SOAR that will permit me to grow as a person in so many ways, from enhancing my academic performance to gaining experience with interacting with many different events and people. It is my hope that I can take what I learn from this program and not only apply this knowledge to graduate school, but to my career as well.

Project Title: Shyness, Loneliness, and Locus of Control as Predictors of Gaming Use The Effects of Gaming on Social Relations On and Off-Line

Student: Anwar Hadeed Major: Psychology and Sociology Expected graduation: May 2015 Faculty mentor: Dr. Stacey Zaremba On campus housing requested during project: No

Participation in the summer SOAR opportunity will help me further my understanding and knowledge in psychology, while also enabling me to study a topic such as Gaming Addiction more extensively. Researching gaming addiction will provide me with the opportunity to be a part of the research community who output data and information to better understand the phenomenon of gaming addiction, which may likely lead to its subsequent inclusion into the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (DSM-5). Conducting this project will allow me to focus on aspects of Gaming Addiction that have yet to be comprehensively researched in the available journal entries and articles. In this project I hope to research the quality of online and offline friendships and relationships in the virtual gaming world, female and male differences accompanied with gaming, personality associations with an extensive gamer in comparison to a non-extensive gamer, and also preventative gaming addiction programs and measures.

SOAR will also input a great deal into my future career and development as a scholar in psychological research. After I graduate from Moravian Collage, I plan to attend graduate school in the hopes of becoming a clinical psychologist. In addition to internship experience, this doctoral program also requires its students to have research experience. The SOAR program will help me to fulfill these goals and aspirations that I

have been working toward during my undergraduate career. Furthermore, the research topic that I hope to work on through SOAR is very much related to clinical psychological work. As mentioned before, research such as on extensive gaming addiction, may lead to its inclusion in the DSM-5. The DSM-5 is primarily what clinical psychologists use to diagnose and assess a client who may suffer from a mental illness. Thus, the research topic is very much related in terms of its relevance to my future career.

Additionally, the summer project will grant me the opportunity to not only work very closely with a faculty member, drawing from Dr. Zaremba's extensive research experience and mentoring, but will also provide me with the chance to mentor the partnering student, Liz Nielsen. I have already done preliminary research on the topic of gaming addiction with Dr. Zaremba, and so this will allow me to share my information and in a sense teach Liz the information that I have already learned. This will allow for us so to work together collectively as one cohesive team. Beyond the invaluable experience I will gain directly from conducting the research, I will also be achieving more collaborative experience.

Collaborative experience is an essential component in the field of research, especially because when researchers publish their articles in academic journals, they seldom create scholarly work individually. It is most often the case where there are two or more researchers who collaborate together and output one structured article that represent their ideas and analyses.

Lastly, the summer SOAR project will enable me to work through the entire process of creating a psychological research project. This includes presenting our findings not only at Moravian College, but also at other psychological conferences.

With the exception of a Moravian College Scholar's Day poster presentation, I have yet to be involved in the presentation and academic conference setting for research findings.

Presentation of psychological findings is yet another integral component to research because as a researcher, it is one of your responsibilities to educate one another on your scientific findings. This process will also give me the necessary experience to be a part of this research community.

Participation in the research SOAR opportunity will help grant me further success in my undergraduate college career and also in my future endeavors.