

Summer Undergraduate Research Experience Cover Sheet

Proposal check list (Please submit entire proposal as a single .rtf document.)

Completed cover sheet with budget

One page summary of project

Tentative work schedule

N/A One paragraph summary of previous funding accomplishments (if applicable)

One page statement from student

Student's unofficial transcript

Faculty Mentor:

Name: **Douglas C. Maynard**

Campus Address: **Psychology Department (JFT 314A)**

Phone: **257-3426**

email: **maynardd@newpaltz.edu**

Student:

Name:

Local Address:

Permanent Address:

Phone:

email:

expected graduation date:

Title of proposed project: **The Effect of Interviewer Expectations and Cognitive Style Upon Confirmatory Behavior and Judgments During the Interview**

Does this work involve human subjects? **Yes**

If yes, has the IRB been notified? **Yes, and an IRB application will be prepared and if awarded a SURE grant, Student Name will submit it immediately.**

Does this work involve recombinant DNA? **No**

If yes, has the IBC been notified? **N/A**

Does this work involve non-human vertebrates? **No**

Preliminary supply budget summary:

1) Temporary service to pay for theatre student to serve as confederate.

Training and preparation 10-12 hours

60 experimental sessions at 0.5 hours per session 30 hours

40-42 hours at \$7.15 = **\$286.00 to \$300.30**

Does the requested budget cover all expenses related to the proposed work? **Yes. The only other costs are modest photocopying (e.g., consent forms and other experimental materials), which can be handled by the Psychology Department.**

If not, explain the sources of funding that will be used. **N/A Project Summary**

Background. This semester, we (myself, Student Name, and several other undergraduate research assistants) have embarked on a research program aimed at investigating various factors that influence the behavior and judgments of managers involved in employment interviews. Our initial experiment, currently underway, examines applicant nonverbal behavior (e.g., quality of the introductory handshake, amount of

eye contact) as a potential influence on how the manager conducts the interview and evaluates the applicant.

Hypotheses. Student Name has approached me with an idea for a follow-up experiment that focuses on the potential effects of pre-interview information and interviewer characteristics on these same interviewer outcomes. This was an exciting idea to me because I have an interest in the power of expectancy (this case in the form of information about applicant suitability before the interview starts) in shaping human experience. After a review of the literature, she has decided to test the following hypotheses: (1) Interviewers who are provided with positive applicant information will ask fewer and easier questions and judge the applicant's responses to be more positive than interviewers who are provided with negative applicant information, and (2) Interviewer *conscientiousness* and *need for cognition* will moderate this relationship, such that conscientious interviewers and those with a desire to seek and consider information associated with a task or event will be less influenced by pre-interview information than those scoring low on these traits. The second hypothesis in particular has been identified by scholars in the field (e.g., Dougherty & Turban, 1999) as important, but as yet untested via experiment.

Methodology and procedure. Sixty participants, drawn from undergraduate and graduate students in psychology and business courses, will take the role of an interviewer for the job of a resident assistant (RA). A theatre arts major will serve as the confederate, acting the role of the applicant. Participants will be randomly assigned to receive information via a completed application form suggesting that the applicant they are about to interview is either very strong or very weak. They will be provided with a list of interview questions from which to choose (some of which have been identified as easy and others as challenging to answer). In the interview, the participant will ask questions from the list and the confederate will respond based on a prepared script. Responses will be the same for both groups of participants. After the interview is done, the confederate will leave and the participant will evaluate the participant's interview responses, and complete measures of conscientiousness and need for cognition. It is important to note that this will be a double blind study, in that neither the researchers (including the confederate), nor the participant will be aware of which condition each participant has been assigned to. The confederate and participants will also be blind to study variables and hypotheses.

Developmental objectives and collaborative potential. As mentioned, Student Name has been working with me since the beginning of the Spring 2007 semester, and she is planning to register for another independent study for the Fall 2007 semester to continue working on the current experiment as well as the proposed experiment should she receive the grant. This project would serve as a valuable bridge between her involvement in my research currently and in the fall. She will be applying to Ph.D. programs in industrial-organizational psychology in the 2007-2008 academic year, and I believe this experience will set her application apart from those of other students. This project will allow Student Name to explore a project that is at once a relevant piece of our larger research program while also being primarily 'hers.' She has deftly identified study variables, questions, and a methodology which would allow her to take advantage of the work we are currently doing – for example, the same job, interview questions and answers, and confederate could still be used – while investigating a new set of independent variables of particular interest to her. It would also allow me to work closely for an entire year with an advanced student whom I have already provided training on our research paradigm and methodology.

Tentative Work Schedule

- Week 1 Recruiting participants and training the confederate
Pilot study and perfecting study design; minor IRB modifications as necessary
Weekly meeting with Dr. Maynard plus additional meetings as necessary
- Week 2 Recruiting participants and training the confederate
Pilot study and perfecting study design; minor IRB modifications as necessary
Weekly meeting with Dr. Maynard plus additional meetings as necessary
- Week 3 Data collection
Weekly meeting with Dr. Maynard plus additional meetings as necessary
- Week 4 Data collection
Weekly meeting with Dr. Maynard plus additional meetings as necessary
- Week 5 Data collection
Weekly meeting with Dr. Maynard plus additional meetings as necessary
- Week 6 Data collection and initial data analysis
Weekly meeting with Dr. Maynard plus additional meetings as necessary
- Week 7 Data analysis and interpretation of results
Weekly meeting with Dr. Maynard plus additional meetings as necessary
- Week 8 Preparation for presenting and/or publishing the study
Weekly meeting with Dr. Maynard plus additional meetings as necessary

Statement from Student

I chose the research topic from an ensemble of ideas born out of my interest in the effect of people's expectations in general, and interviewer expectations in specific, on the outcome of an interaction. For the duration of eight weeks, I will be involved in every step of the development, implementation and analysis of the proposed study. In order to get the most out of this experience, several tasks will be completed in anticipation of the project:

Development of stimuli and materials: I am currently part of a team that is conducting a research study with a similar design. The development of the interview questions and answers and job description will require less time because they will be adapted from the original study. I will develop the pre-interview information (i.e., positive and negative completed job application forms) used to manipulate the primary independent variable. I will also identify reliable and valid measures of conscientiousness and need for cognition.

Designing the study: We will take the design that I helped develop for the first study, and adjust it for the proposed study, with the new independent and dependent variables.

Writing and submitting the IRB proposal: This will be done at the end of the Spring 2007 semester so that I do not have to spend time during the summer waiting for IRB approval.

The following tasks will occur during the eight weeks of the project itself:

Recruiting participants: We will recruit 60 students from summer business and psychology classes. There are over 30 classes offered, with a minimum requirement of 12 students in each, which provides a large enough subject pool. I have already contacted one professor who has expressed willingness to offer extra credit for students who participate in the study, and I will make further contact with other instructors in this direction.

Training the confederate and piloting the experiment: One theatre arts student will be recruited as a confederate for the study. My job will be to help inform the student about his/her role in the study and assist him/her in the preparation and administration processes.

Developing and using a coding system: One of the dependent variables is the amount and quality of the notes that the interviewer takes while the applicant is answering the interview questions. A coding system will be developed to interpret the information as positive, neutral, or negative, with assistance from Dr. Maynard.

Collecting data: This will involve scheduling of the confederate and the participants and running the experiment, one participant at a time.

Entering, analyzing, and interpreting the data: I will use SPSS to conduct independent samples t tests and multiple regression analyses in order to assess the results. Dr. Maynard will train me on the use and interpretation of the advanced statistical analyses.

Preparing to present and possibly submit the results for publication

I also intend to take Independent Study in the Fall '07 semester. This will provide me the opportunity to continue the research experience beyond the summer program. Depending on the development of the proposed study, I will either continue working on it, or explore other areas connected to the topic.

Student Qualification for the Project

I have taken or am now taking several courses related to research methodology (Psychological Statistics, Research Methods) and I-O Psychology (Human Resource Management, Industrial Psychology), in addition to the Independent Study I am currently involved in.