

SARA MEI

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EDUCATION

Doctor of Philosophy **Colorado State University**, Fort Collins, CO
2025 – Expected 2028 Clinical Psychology – APA Accredited
Advisor: Noah N. Emery, Ph.D.

Master of Science **Colorado State University**, Fort Collins, CO
2022 – 2025 Counseling Psychology – APA Accredited
Master's Thesis: *Using passive sensing to isolate a biosignature for craving among individuals in early alcohol use disorder recovery.*
Advisor: Noah N. Emery, Ph.D.

Bachelor of Science **University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign**, Champaign, IL
2016 – 2020 Distinction in Psychology – Clinical-Community Concentration
Honor's Thesis: *The influence of alcohol and group personality on alcohol's rewards in social setting.*
Advisor: Catharine E. Fairbairn, Ph.D.

PUBLICATIONS

Peer-reviewed Articles:

3. Emery, N. N., Carlon, H. A., Walters, K. J., **Mei, S.**, Sung, A., DeFalco, A., Baumgardner, S., Mataczynski, M. J. & Prince, M. A. (2025). Examining the moment-to-moment association between drinking and problems: The moderating role of emotional functioning. *Alcohol: Clinical & Experimental Research*, 49(5), 1126–1138. doi: 10.1111/acer.70035
2. Silverman, A. L., Ferguson, I., Bullis, J. R., Bajwa, H., **Mei, S.**, Beard, C. (2025). Program evaluation of Internet-delivered Cognitive Behavioral Treatments for anxiety and depression in a digital clinic. *Journal of Mood and Anxiety Disorders*, 9, 100106. doi: 10.1016/j.xjmad.2025.100106
1. Hudson, C. C., Klein, K., Ong, C. W., Handy, A., Swee, M. B., Lambert, H., **Mei, S.**, Hom, M. A., Weiss, R. B., Beard, C., Björgvinsson, T. (2022). Treatment outcomes and patient perceptions of a

virtual partial hospital program: A mixed-method study. *Psychotherapy Research*, 33, 235–250.
doi: 10.1080/10503307.2022.2088314.

Under Review:

2. Eddie, D., Nguyen, M., Zeng, K., **Mei, S.**, Emery, N. N. (under review). Heart Rate Variability Biofeedback for substance use disorder: A randomized clinical trial.
1. Beckham, E., **Mei, S.**, Bajwa, H., Martin, H., Björgvinsson, T., Beard, C. (under review). Interpretation bias is associated with hopelessness and perfectionism in a psychiatric sample. *Behaviour Research and Therapy*. Pre-Registration: doi.org/10.17605/OSF.IO/KC3JY.

In Preparation:

8. Emery, N. N., **Mei, S.**, DeFalco, A., Sung, A., Baumgardner S., Mataczynski, M. J., Connor, B. T. (in preparation). Understanding the intersection of polysubstance use, depression, and suicide attempts in a large epidemiological sample of adolescents.
7. Sung, A., **Mei, S.**, Emery, N. N. (in preparation). In-the-moment effects of alcohol and cannabis use on rumination: The mediating role of affect.
6. **Mei, S.**, Eddie, D., Emery, N. N. (in preparation). Heart-rate variability predicting stress, substance use, and cravings: Feasibility study with biometrics.
5. **Mei, S.**, Winters, A., Emery, N. N. (in preparation). At-Risk: Ecological momentary assessment of drinking and thoughts of death among college students with substance use disorder. Pre-Registration: osf.io/gex4u.
4. **Mei, S.**, Emery, N. N. (in preparation). The effects of sleep quality on substance use mediated by positive and negative affect: An ecological momentary study of depressed young adults. Pre-Registration: osf.io/vdx5m.
3. **Mei, S.**, Emery, N. N. (in preparation). The effects of loneliness, social isolation, and COVID-19 policies on substance use: An ecological momentary assessment study. Pre-Registration: osf.io/va7x9.
2. Bajwa, H., **Mei, S.**, Bullis, J., Beard, C. (in preparation). Symptom improvement and patient satisfaction in a virtual CBT study.
1. **Mei, S.**, Bajwa, H., Bullis, J., Beard, C. (in preparation). Skills of cognitive therapy predicting treatment outcomes for internalizing symptoms.

PRESENTATIONS

* Denotes role as a presenter/co-presenter

Oral Presentations:

6. **Mei, S.*** & Emery, N. N. (2024, November). Using passive sensing to isolate a biosignature for craving among individuals in early alcohol use disorder recovery. In C. Hotchkin (chair), *Broadening the Reach of Passive Sensing: Insights and Lessons Learned from Clinical Researchers*. [Symposium]. Annual meeting of the Association for Behavioral and Cognitive Therapies, Philadelphia, PA.
5. Emery, N. N. & **Mei, S.** (2024, June). Quantifying alcohol use disorder symptom heterogeneity within-persons: An ecological momentary assessment study. In F. Wang (chair), *Novel Methods to Assess Impaired Control Over Drinking and Other Alcohol Use Disorder Symptoms*. [Symposium]. Annual meeting of the Research Society on Alcohol, Minneapolis, MN.
4. **Mei, S.*** & Emery, N. N. (2024, June). Examining the moment-to-moment association between drinking and problems young-adults with alcohol use disorder. In H. Karoly & M. Sloan (co-chairs), *Novel Approaches to Understanding the Role of Affect in Alcohol Use*. [Symposium]. Annual meeting of the Research Society on Alcohol, Minneapolis, MN.
3. Beard, C., Bullis, J. R., **Mei, S.***, Bajwa, H. E. (2023, November). Enhancing engagement in digital mental health: Coaching 101 [Mini workshop]. Annual conference of the Association for Behavioral and Cognitive Therapies, Seattle, WA.
2. Bullis, J. R., Bajwa, H. E., **Mei, S.**, Rauch, S., Beard, C. (2022, November). Effectiveness of an Internet-based Cognitive Behavior Therapy (iCBT) intervention for anxiety and depression: A four-month follow-up [Symposium]. Annual conference of the Association for Behavioral and Cognitive Therapies, Manhattan, NY.
1. Beard, C., Bullis, J. R., Bajwa, H. E., **Mei, S.*** (2022, November). Enhancing engagement in digital mental health: Coaching 101 [Mini workshop]. Annual conference of the Association for Behavioral and Cognitive Therapies, Manhattan, NY.

Poster Presentations:

18. Silverman, A. L., Ferguson, I. L., Bullis, J. R., Bajwa, H., **Mei, S.**, & Beard, C. (2025, August). Program evaluation of internet-delivered cognitive behavioral treatments for anxiety and depression in a digital clinic. To be presented at the 13th annual meeting of the International Society of Research on Internet Interventions.
17. **Mei, S.***, Winters, A., Baumgardner, S., Sung, A., Mataczynski, M. J., DeFalco, A., Richardson, C., Emery, N. N. (2024, April). Ecological momentary assessment of drinking and thoughts of death among college students. Presented at the annual meeting of the Collaborative Perspectives on Addiction, Denver, CO.
16. Mataczynski, M. J., Sung, A., **Mei, S.**, Baumgardner, S., Richardson, C., DeFalco, A., Emery, N. N. (2024, April). Emotion's role in challenging interpersonal contexts and substance use. Presented at the annual meeting of the Collaborative Perspectives on Addiction, Denver, CO.

15. Richardson, C., DeFalco, A., **Mei, S.**, Baumgardner, S., Mataczynski, M. J., Emery, N. N. (2024, April). Non-use on planned drinking days in young-adults with AUD: Role of craving and emotion dysregulation. Presented at the annual meeting of the Collaborative Perspectives on Addiction, Denver, CO.
14. DeFalco, A., Richardson, C., Mataczynski, M. J., **Mei, S.**, Baumgardner, S., Emery, N. N. (2024, April). Ecological momentary assessment of savoring, cannabis use, and problems in young adults with CUD. Presented at the annual meeting of the Collaborative Perspectives on Addiction, Denver, CO.
13. **Mei, S.***, Emery, N. N. (2023, November). The effects of sleep quality on positive and negative affect, alcohol use, and cravings: An ecological momentary study of depressed young adults. Presented at the annual meeting of the Association for Behavioral and Cognitive Therapies, Seattle, WA.
12. **Mei, S.***, Mataczynski, M. J., Baumgardner, S., Sung, A., Norman, T., Sturgess, K., Unis, G., Emery, N. N. (2023, June). Negative consequences for individuals with risky alcohol consumption: An ecological momentary assessment study. Presented at the annual meeting of the Research Society on Alcoholism, Bellevue, WA.
11. Emery, N. N., **Mei, S.**, Sung, A., Baumgardner, S., Mataczynski, M. J., Unis, G., Sturgess, K., Norman, T., Prince, M. A. (2023, March). Examining the moment-to-moment association between drinking and problems. Presented at the annual meeting of the Collaborative Perspectives on Addiction, Albuquerque, NM.
10. **Mei, S.***, Sung, A., Baumgardner, S., Mataczynski, M. J., Sturgess, K., Unis, G., Wheeler, E., Norman, T., Emery, N. N. (2023, March). Loneliness, isolation, and COVID-19 policies on alcohol use: Ecological momentary assessment study. Presented at the annual meeting of the Collaborative Perspectives on Addiction, Albuquerque, NM.
9. Sung, A., Baumgardner, S., Mataczynski, M. J., **Mei, S.**, Norman, T., Unis, G., Sturgess, K., Emery, N. N. (2023, March). In-the-moment effects of alcohol and cannabis use on rumination: The mediating role of positive and negative affect. Presented at the annual meeting of the Collaborative Perspectives on Addiction, Albuquerque, NM.
8. Hudson, C. C., Klein, K., Ong, C. W., Handy, A., Swee, M. B., Lambert, H., **Mei, S.**, Hom, M. A., Weiss, R. B., Beard, C., Björgvinsson, T. (2022, November). Treatment outcomes and patient satisfaction of a virtual partial hospital program: A mixed-method study. Presented at the annual meeting of the Association for Behavioral and Cognitive Therapies, Manhattan, NY.
7. **Mei, S.***, Bajwa, H., Brown, S., Wenzel, M., Freedman, S., Nava, E., Rauch, S., Beard, C., Bullis, J. (2021, November). Skills of cognitive therapy as a predictor of treatment outcomes in a virtual CBT program for anxiety and depression. Presented at the virtual annual meeting of the Association for Behavioral and Cognitive Therapies, New Orleans, LA.

6. Bajwa, H., **Mei, S.**, Brown, S., Wenzel, M., Freedman, S., Nava, E., Rauch, S., Bullis, J., Beard, C. (2021, November). Effectiveness of digital CBT interventions during COVID-19. Presented at the virtual annual meeting of the Association for Behavioral and Cognitive Therapies, New Orleans, LA.
5. Brown, S. E., **Mei, S.**, Bajwa, H. E., Bullis, J. R., Rauch, S. L., Beard, C. (2021, November). Understanding patient preferences in a virtual cognitive behavioral therapy clinic. Presented at the virtual annual meeting of the Association for Behavioral and Cognitive Therapies, New Orleans, LA.
4. **Mei, S.***, Ariss, T. (2021, April). The social effect of alcohol on group dynamics. Presented at the virtual annual meeting of the Midwestern Psychological Association, Chicago, IL.
3. **Mei, S.*** (2020, April). The influence of alcohol on social cohesion in triads with group personality composition. Presented virtually at Undergraduate Research Symposium, UIUC, Champaign, IL.
2. **Mei, S.*** (2020, April). The influence of alcohol and group personality on alcohol's rewards in social setting. Presented virtually at Honors and Capstone Poster Fair, UIUC, Champaign, IL.
1. Lee, Z., Caumiant, E. P., **Mei, S.**, Kang, D., Fairbairn, C. E. (2020, February). The effects of social stress on the incentive salience of alcohol cues: An ERP study of heavy drinkers. Presented at the annual meeting of the Society for Personality and Social Psychology, New Orleans, LA.

Invited Talks:

5. Hart, F. G., Mendoza, R., Wang, S., Ramos, G., Farrise, K., **Mei, S.***, Rbeiz, K. (2023, November). Graduate School: What You Really Need to Know. Panel conducted at the Association for Behavioral and Cognitive Therapies, Seattle, WA.
4. **Mei, S.***, McFarland, N., Hetelekides, L., Tompkins, T., Carter, B. (2023, March). Getting Into Grad School. Panel conducted at Colorado State University, Fort Collins, CO.
3. Manbeck, A. B., **Mei, S.***, Lazo-Salmeron, W., Arend, J. (2023, January). LGBTQIA+ #nextgen Stories. Panel conducted virtually at University of Minnesota's Next-Gen Psych Scholars Program, Minneapolis, MN.
2. Eboigbe, L., **Mei, S.***, Hoseingholizade, S., Chu, A. (2022, January). Reclaiming Our Light: Building on Resilience and Cultivating Healthy Practices. Panel conducted virtually at University of Minnesota's Next-Gen Psych Scholars Program, Minneapolis, MN.
1. **Mei, S.***, Abubakare, O., Strickler, J. G., McKenna, M. R. (2021, May). Psychology Graduate Students Organization's Post-Baccalaureate Panel Event. Panel conducted virtually at Ohio State University, Columbus, OH.

RESEARCH EXPERIENCE

2024 – Present **Colorado State University**, Adolescent Wellness Team

PI: Lauren B. Shomaker, Ph.D.

Research Assistant

Collect data and provide interventions as part of a randomized controlled trial to evaluate the effectiveness of cognitive-behavioral therapy, exercise training, and their combinations in preventing the progression of insulin resistance in female adolescents at risk for type 2 diabetes and experiencing mood-related issues (R01DK132557-01). Conduct risk assessments and diagnostic clinical interviewing to determine participant study eligibility.

2022 – Present **Colorado State University**, Advancing Research on Change Lab

PI: Noah N. Emery, Ph.D.

Graduate Research Assistant

Collect data for an ecological momentary assessment (EMA) study to identify state- and trait-level variables associated with substance use outcomes and behaviors.

2020 – 2022 **McLean Hospital**, Cognition and Affect Research and Education Lab

PI: Courtney Beard, Ph.D.

Clinical Research Coordinator

Submitted and managed IRB, conducted screenings, assessments, and study administration for a clinical trial funded by Combined Jewish Philanthropies of Greater Boston testing the effectiveness of online platforms for 8-week transdiagnostic virtual cognitive-behavioral therapy (CBT) programs.

2020 – 2021 **Vanderbilt University**, Innerworld, Inc. (formerly named Very Real Help Club)

PI: Steven D. Hollon, Ph.D.

Research Assistant

Conducted monthly qualitative interviews with participants to assess the impact of group therapy in virtual reality (VR) as a novel treatment modality for clinical disorders. Conducted interviews with individuals with opioid use disorder to gather feedback for feasibility of the VR app (R41DA051294-01).

2020 – 2020 **University of Illinois**, Cognitive & Affective Neuroscience of Psychopathology Lab

PI: Wendy Heller, Ph.D.

Undergraduate Research Assistant

Conducted screenings, assessments, and study administration for an ambulatory study assessing the effects of immersive virtual environments via VR, specifically nature exposure, on participants' affect, anxiety symptoms, and overall well-being.

2018 – 2020 **University of Illinois**, The Project on Life Experiences

PI: Thomas R. Kwapil, Ph.D.

Undergraduate Research Assistant

Collected data for study investigating the dimensional nature of psychopathology, specifically

mapping schizophrenia and schizophrenia spectrum disorders onto the schizotypy continuum across a broader continuity of expression.

2018 – 2020 **University of Illinois**, Alcohol Research Lab

PI: Catharine E. Fairbairn, Ph.D.

Undergraduate Research Assistant

Conducted recruitment, screenings, assessments, and study administration for a laboratory alcohol administration study examining reinforcing properties and incentives that motivate heavy and social drinkers; coded facial expressions and speech behaviors of participants in experimental videos (R01AA025969-03). Prepared data for machine learning analyses.

CLINICAL EXPERIENCE

2025 – Present **Colorado State University**, Health Network

Clinical Therapist

Provide individual and group therapy services in Drugs, Alcohol, and You (DAY) programs for undergraduate students who are concerned about their substance use or are required to complete an assessment or engage in treatment by the University's disciplinary system.

Treatments used include Cognitive Behavioral Therapy, Motivational Interviewing, Cognitive Processing Therapy, Acceptance and Commitment Therapy.

2024 – Present **Colorado State University**, Adolescent Wellness Team

Group Facilitator and Study Therapist, Supervisors: Lauren D. Gulley, Ph.D., Sarah Perzow, Ph.D.

Provide manualized Cognitive Behavioral Therapy to groups of female adolescents at risk for type 2 diabetes experiencing mood concerns.

2023 – Present **Colorado State University**, Psychological Services Center

Clinical Therapist and Assessor, Supervisors: Noah N. Emery, Ph.D., Crystal Pierce, Ph.D., Michael Brinker, Psy.D.

Provide empirically supported treatments and conduct psychological assessment services for individuals through community mental health clinic. Treatments used include Cognitive Behavioral Therapy, Dialectical Behavior Therapy, Acceptance and Commitment Therapy, Cognitive Processing Therapy, Motivational Interviewing.

2023 – 2024 **Colorado State University**, Health Network

Clinical Therapist, Supervisors: Jeff Nepute, Ph.D., Adam Sargent, Ph.D.

Provided individual therapy services in General Services for undergraduate students.

Treatments used included Cognitive Behavioral Therapy, Dialectical Behavior Therapy,

Acceptance and Commitment Therapy, Internal Family Systems Therapy, Time-limited Dynamic Psychotherapy.

2020 – 2022 **McLean Hospital**, Cognition and Affect Research and Education Lab
CBT Coach, Supervisors: Courtney Beard, Ph.D., Jacqueline R. Bullis, Ph.D.
 Collaboratively worked with patients to identify and achieve treatment goals for an 8-week virtual CBT clinic. Treatment used included Cognitive Behavioral Therapy.

2020 – 2021 **Vanderbilt University**, Innerworld, Inc. (formerly named Very Real Help Club)
Group Facilitator, Supervisor: Steven D. Hollon, Ph.D.
 Led up to 20 participants and facilitated discussions during weekly support group meetings to address mental health and substance use recovery via virtual reality, partnered with SMART Recovery. Treatments used included Cognitive Behavioral Therapy, Dialectical Behavior Therapy, Acceptance and Commitment Therapy, Motivational Interviewing.

GRANTS

2. 8/1/23 – A Pilot Study of Ambulatory Heart Rate Variability Biofeedback for Substance Use
 7/31/24 Disorder – Mei Diversity Supplement
 Agency: National Institute on Drug Abuse
 R21 DA056468-01 (PI: David Eddie, Ph.D.)
 Total Costs: \$57,995
 Role: Candidate/Co-Investigator

1. Assessing Group Diversity and Individual Affect During Alcohol Intoxication: An Ambulatory Investigation
 Agency: National Science Foundation
 Graduate Research Fellowship Program
Unfunded

PROFESSIONAL AFFILIATIONS

Professional Memberships

2023 – Present Research Society on Alcoholism
 2022 – Present American Psychological Association, Society of Addiction Psychology (Division 50)
 2022 – Present Association for Behavioral and Cognitive Therapies, Sexual and Gender Minority Special Interest Group
 2022 – Present Collaborative Perspectives on Addiction
 2022 Application Statement Feedback Program
 2021 – Present Association for Behavioral and Cognitive Therapies, Technology & Behavior Change Special Interest Group

2021 – Present	Association for Behavioral and Cognitive Therapies
2021 – Present	Asian American Psychological Association
2021 – Present	Psychin' Out
2020 – Present	American Psychological Association
2020 – 2024	Next-Gen Psych Scholars Program
2021 – 2023	Midwestern Psychological Association
2020 – 2021	Society for Personality and Social Psychology

HONORS & AWARDS

2025	<i>Principles of Community Award</i> , Colorado State University
2017 – 2020	<i>Dean's List</i> , University of Illinois
2018	Alpha Phi Omega, University of Illinois <i>Brother of the Week</i> , for a brother who is commended for their recent positive and significant impact on the chapter <i>Unknown Brother</i> , a semesterly award for a brother who is “doing service out of the spotlight and with the spirit that helped found the Boy Scouts of America in 1908.”

PROFESSIONAL TRAINING/SERVICE

Ad hoc reviewer

Mentored reviews

2021	Behaviour Research and Therapy
2021	Clinical Psychological Science

INSTITUTIONAL SERVICE

2023 – Present **Graduate Showcase Committee**

Graduate Student Organizer

Nominated to serve as an organizer for Colorado State University's annual graduate show, which aims to premier interdisciplinary celebration of student creativity, research, and entrepreneurship. Review submissions, manage database, attend faculty meetings.

2017 – 2020 **Alpha Phi Omega**, Service Fraternity – Alpha Alpha Chapter

Marketing Director

Served as a leader of the Communications Committee. Created and maintained the chapter's good relations with local businesses, the national fraternity, and service partners. Presented

weekly progress reports every chapter meeting. Supervised a small task force in advertising. Fundraised for various humanitarian efforts and events.

TEACHING & MENTORING EXPERIENCE

2021 – Present Psychin’ Out

Graduate Student Mentor

International organization for psychology students led by psychology students. Trained to provide mentoring for clinical/counseling psychology Ph.D. applicants (including goal setting, constructive feedback, editing support, and networking)

2024 – 2025 Research Design and Analysis II (Instructor: Niccole A. Nelson, Ph.D.)

Graduate Teaching Assistant

Graded and provided feedback on writing and lab assignments. Provided constructive criticism to improve writing skills, statistical literacy, and programming language

2020 – 2024 Next-Gen Psych Scholars Program

Graduate Student Mentor

Grad student-led predoctoral prep program based in University of Minnesota. Trained to provide mentoring for clinical/counseling psychology Ph.D. applicants (including goal setting, constructive feedback, editing support, and networking)

2022 – 2023 General Psychology (Instructor: Hannah Finch)

Graduate Teaching Assistant

Graded and provided feedback on writing assignments. Provided constructive criticism to improve writing skills and to emphasize considerations in writing about psychopathology

2022 Application Statement Feedback Program

Volunteer Editor

Trained to provide constructive feedback and editing support for psychology Ph.D. applicants

SPECIALIZED SKILLS AND TRAINING

Behavioral Analysis

- *Facial Action Coding System Training (FACS)*: Certified in FACS, an anatomically based system developed by Paul Ekman and Wallace Friesen, to objectively code visible facial behavior and movement. Completed 100 hours of self-instructional training to pass a standardized assessment for certification.

- *Electroencephalography (EEG) Training:* Trained on how to perform an EEG on participants for an event-related potential (ERP) study.

Clinical Symptoms and Functioning Measures

Columbia-Suicide Severity Rating Scale (C-SSRS)
 Structured Clinical Interview for the DSM-5 (SCID-V)
 Kiddie Schedule for Affective Disorders and Schizophrenia for School-Age Children (KSADS)
 Structured Interview for DSM-IV Personality (SIDP-IV)
 Diagnostic Interview for Anxiety, Mood, and OCD and Related Neuropsychiatric Disorders (DIAMOND)
 Timeline Follow-back Method Assessment – Alcohol (TLFB)

Proficient Programs

Statistical Analysis: R, RStudio, STATA, M+, SPSS Statistics and Syntax, JASP-Stats, MATLAB, Kubios HRV Scientific, MindWare Technologies' Heart Rate Variability Analysis
Data Collection and/or Management: REDCap, Qualtrics Surveys, Epic Systems, mEMA, ExpiWell (formerly named Expimetrics), Metric Wire, SONA (UIUC), Ripple Science
Electronic CBT-based Platforms: Internet-Based Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (iCBT), IntelliCare, SilverCloud
Miscellaneous: The Observer XT, Microsoft Excel, Microsoft PowerPoint, Adobe Premiere Pro

Hardware

BACtrack Skyn (wrist-worn transdermal sensor), BACtrack breathalyzer, Alco-Sensor IV (breathalyzer), SCRAM CAM (alcohol ankle monitor), eye-tracker, Oculus headset, Garmin smartwatches

Certifications

2024 American Red Cross, Adult and Pediatric First Aid/CPR/AED
 2020 HIPAA Training
 2019 FACS Facial Action Coding System

Advanced Quantitative Methodology Training

2024 **Introduction to Structural Equation Modeling.** Presented by: Dan Bauer, Ph.D. & Patrick Curran, Ph.D., CenterStat
 2024 **Multilevel Modeling.** Presented by: Dan Bauer, Ph.D. & Patrick Curran, Ph.D., CenterStat
 2024 **Longitudinal Data Analysis Using SEM.** Presented by: Paul D. Allison, Ph.D., Statistical Horizons