

JOSHUA R. ORTEGA

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EDUCATION

Ph.D. in Psychological and Brain Sciences *In Progress*
University of California, Santa Barbara
Research Area: Cognition, Perception, and Cognitive Neuroscience (CPCN)
Advisor: Jonathan Schooler, Ph.D.

B.A. in Economics, Minor in Sustainability May 2020
Pepperdine University
GPA: 3.95, *Summa Cum Laude*
Dean's List – Spring & Fall 2017, Fall 2018, Spring & Fall 2019

RESEARCH EXPERIENCE

Research Affiliate September 2021 – September 2022
University of California, Santa Barbara
Department of Psychological and Brain Sciences

Post-Baccalaureate Research Assistant August 2020 – September 2021
University of California, Santa Barbara
Center for Mindfulness and Human Potential

PEER-REVIEWED PUBLICATIONS

Ortega, J. R., Gross, M. E., & Schooler, J. W. (2025). When life is but a dream: Does transliminality predict continuity of thought across the sleep-wake cycle? *Philosophy and the Mind Sciences*, 6. <https://doi.org/10.33735/phimisci.2025.10272>

Mrazek, A. J., Mrazek, M. D., Brown, C. S., Karimi, S. S., Ji, R. R., Ortega, J. R., Maul, A., Carr, P. C., Delegard, A. M., & Kirk, A. C. (2022). Attention training improves the self-reported focus and emotional regulation of high school students. *Technology, Mind, and Behavior*, 3(4: Winter). <https://doi.org/10.1037/tmb0000092>

Mrazek, A. J., Mrazek, M. D., Ortega, J.R., Ji, R. R., Karimi, S. S., Brown, C. S., Alexander, C. A., et al. (2021). Teenagers' smartphone use during homework: An analysis of beliefs and behaviors around digital multitasking. *Education Sciences*, 11(11), 713. <http://dx.doi.org/10.3390/educsci11110713>

ACADEMIC PRESENTATIONS

Ortega, J. R., McGuinness, J.E., Schooler, J.W., Gross, M.E. (2025, November 22). *Diverging meaning-makers: Apophenia as a common cognitive basis for psychoticism and creativity* [[Poster presentation](#)]. Psychonomic Society 66th Annual Meeting, Denver, CO.

Ortega, J. R., Christensen, A.P., Gross, M.E., Schooler, J.W. (2024, May 31). *Abstract moments: A network approach to capturing states of openness* [[Conference Talk](#)]. Psychological and Brain Sciences Mini-Con, Santa Barbara, CA.

Ortega, J. R., Gross, M.E., McGuinness, J.E., Schooler, J.W. (2024, February 10). *The virtuous cycle of creativity: Exploring the impact of art on cognitive judgements and divergent thinking* [[Poster presentation](#)]. Annual Convention of the Society for Personality and Social Psychology (SPSP), San Diego, CA.

Ortega, J. R., Gross, M.E., Schooler, J.W. (2023, March 24). *Intuitive, creative or transliminal? Crossing the threshold from intuition to convergent thinking* [[Poster presentation](#)]. Annual Meeting of the Society for the Neuroscience of Creativity (SfNC), San Francisco, CA.

ARTISTIC PUBLICATIONS

Joshua R. Ortega. “Let Me Take You Down”. *Camas Magazine*, Summer 2022, p. 8.

TEACHING EXPERIENCE

Teaching Assistant September 2022 – Present

University of California, Santa Barbara

Courses: Mindfulness: Science and Practice (PSY 121), Statistical Methods in Psychological and Brain Sciences (PSY 10B), Advanced Research Methods (PSY 120L), Consciousness and Cognition (PSY 120), Introduction to Cognitive Psychology (PSY 108)

High School and University Tutor August 2020 – September 2022

Grade Potential Tutoring

Courses tutored: Introduction to Microeconomics, Introduction to Macroeconomics, Calculus I, AP Microeconomics, AP Macroeconomics, AP English, Algebra, Geometry

HONORS AND AWARDS

Honorable Mention, NSF Graduate Research Fellowship 2024

Summa Cum Laude, Pepperdine University 2020

Blanche E. Seaver Faculty-Staff Scholarship, Pepperdine University 2019

Social Science Division Scholarship, Pepperdine University 2019

National Hispanic Scholar, College Board National Recognition Program 2015

MISCELLANEOUS EXPERIENCE

Study Abroad, Pepperdine University, Buenos Aires, Argentina 2017- 2018

School Record Holder, Pepperdine University Track and Field 2017

Eagle Scout, Boy Scouts of America 2016