

I would like to extend my gratitude to the Shackouls Honors College for awarding me an SHC Undergraduate Travel award. The award allowed me to travel and participate in the Southeastern Psychological Association (SEPA) annual meeting held in New Orleans, LA from March 25 – 28, 2026. My research was presented in the Psi Chi Honors Society Distinguished Poster session. This was my first experience as a lead author for a study here at Mississippi State University. My research was on "The Effects of AI Explanations on Students Judgments of Learning" and was conducted in Dr. Jaeger's STEM Thinking and Reasoning lab through the psychology department. The goal of this project was to examine how perceptions around AI generated content impact students' comprehension and judgments of learning. In this study, we had participants read an expository text about cellular division. After reading the text, they were presented with a short explanation of the main ideas from the text and were told that it was written by a TA, a peer student, or by ChatGPT. Results demonstrated that although there was no difference in learning across the three conditions, students in the ChatGPT condition rated their understanding as the lowest and rated the explanation as lower quality and less helpful for their learning even though the explanations were the same in all conditions. These results suggest that students are skeptical of content generated by AI and that future research should use this skepticism to support comprehension by perhaps asking students to engage with AI-generated content more deeply.

Conducting this research has been an amazing opportunity for me. It has helped shape my interests in pursuing graduate studies and showed me the payoff for all my hard work in the lab. After finding significant results, I submitted an abstract to SEPA and was accepted to participate in the Distinguished Psi Chi poster session. Although there were several undergraduate Psi Chi poster sessions at the conference, only one session was for research deemed "distinguished". The poster session lasted for two hours, and during that time I got the chance to meet new people who were interested in my poster and tell them about all the work we had put into this study and our results in the last two semesters. Psi Chi awarded me with a "National Psi Chi Research Award" that provided positive feedback and insight about how an abstract and poster are perceived by other researchers. The next day, I attended several other poster sessions and was able to talk to multiple students like me that have worked hard on their research. I had some great conversations with new friends who told me about their interests and how that impacted their research interests. I was also exposed to new research ideas and different labs across the Southeast that are doing research on things similar to what I am working on. Thursday night, I attended dinner with my mentor Dr. Jaeger, my lab mate Christopher Jolivette, and another MSU psychology faculty, Dr. Whitlock. During this dinner, we engaged in stimulating conversation that provided me with good advice for my future after graduation and I was able to discuss potential future directions for my own work. On my final day I attended another Psi Chi poster session

that my lab mate, Christopher Jolivette, was presenting in. I also attended a talk session for the Special interest group called Southeastern Working in Memory Research (SWIM). My advisor, Dr. Jaeger, gave the Junior Keynote address. Overall, this trip provided me with an abundance of experience including knowledge in public speaking, professionalism, and networking and a deeper understanding of research in Cognitive Psychology. When our own Mississippi State Research Symposium came around, I was extremely prepared to present and compete in the three-minute speech. Once again, I want to thank the Shackouls Honors College enough for providing me with this opportunity.

- Joanna Grace Lambert