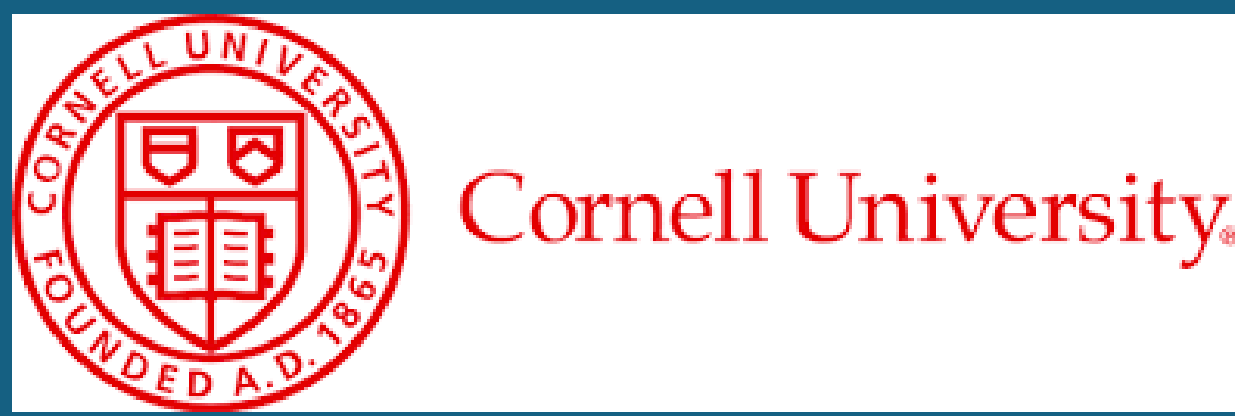




Leadership-in-Action



in Germany

Chloe Asack



Research Project

Objective: We are examining how the psychology of individuals' decision making processes impacts their reactions to public health communications. We developed messages based on Fuzzy Trace Theory (FTT) which Dr. Valerie Reyna, the principal investigator of this project, is a creator of. This theory has been shown to strongly inform public health communications. We focused on three pressing public health domains: measles, salt consumption, and vaping.

Outcomes: We developed the first pilot survey of this project throughout the summer and we are hoping to begin looking at data in the fall.

How I contributed: In Germany, I worked under Dr. Wolfgang Gaissmaier and the team worked to create and alter messages that could trigger participants to better remember the information they intake. This summer I studied prior research, evaluated messages used in previous studies, and used Qualtrics to draft the pilot study. I am so grateful that I had the opportunity to work under top experts in the field to apply FTT to new domains.

Future Directions: Utilizing the insights we are gaining is key solving these public health crises. Working on this project has given me a much deeper understanding global public health and I am excited to continue working with the lab on this project.



The top of a hill in Konstanz, Germany



River in Konstanz, Germany, featuring one of their landmarks in the distance (The Imperia)

Global Experience

The psychology department of the University of Konstanz was a welcoming community and I went on various excursions with my lab group. I also had lunch with them during every work day, so I had the opportunity to get to know them and learn about their careers in psychology. During our lunches we would often workshop our research projects and discuss the current goings-on in the field. We all really enjoyed discussing our own cultures and our cultural differences. Getting to know people who were so enthusiastic about having cross-cultural discussions was an invaluable experience in furthering my global citizenship. I believe that speaking to individuals at different points in their careers from many different educational backgrounds is crucial to my growth as a student.

Konstanz is a small city in the south of Germany. I found its most striking features to be the vast Lake Konstanz and the river that crosses through the old town. Many of the students and professors I worked with were very enthusiastic about water activities such as swimming and stand-up paddling, so I spent some of my free time exploring Konstanz's various bodies of water.

Reflections

As an undergraduate, I feel that I have so much room to grow into being a leader and a global citizen. To explore another culture on my own and to work in their academic system felt very intimidating beforehand, but it was an incredibly enriching experience and I believe that I am a better student and traveler because of my leadership-in-action in Germany. From my leadership-in-action summer, I am now confident that I can continue to grow into a leader who knows the importance of global cultures and continues to explore them.

I found this research project so enriching because I was able to build on the skills I gained from my first Laidlaw summer while learning new ones. In between the two summers, I continued to work in the Reyna Lab which has been an indispensable part of my academic growth. Through this project, I have been able to fully understand the importance of increasing the efficacy of public health communications and my understanding of decision making and memory has deepened. I will apply the knowledge I gained during my Laidlaw summers to any future career path I undertake. I am incredibly grateful to the Reyna and Gaissmaier labs for welcoming me and to the Laidlaw Foundation for funding these once-in-a-lifetime experiences.

A bridge in Berlin, Germany (right)



River in Konstanz, Germany (left)

