Kate Worwag

kaworwag@gmail.com | 720.614.4414 | LinkedIn

Education

University of Florida, Ph.D.   **August 2024-Present**

College of Public Health and Health Professions, Gainesville, FL
• Clinical Health Psychology
• Primary Mentor: Kathryn Ross, PhD.

Drexel University, M.S.   **September 2022-March 2024**

College of Arts and Sciences, Philadelphia, PA
• Major: Psychology
• Current GPA: 4.0
• Primary Mentor: Erica LaFata, PhD; Secondary Mentor: Meghan Butryn, PhD.

University of Groningen, B.S.   **August 2019-June 2022**

University College Groningen, Groningen, Netherlands
• Major: Social Sciences
• GPA: 4.0
• Mentor: Naomi de Ruiter, PhD.

Arizona State University, Externship Research Placement   **August 2021-December 2021**

Barrett, The Honors College: Tempe, AZ
• Major: Psychology
• GPA: 4.0
• Mentor: Cheryl Conrad, PhD

Awards, Grants and Fellowships

Graduate Assistantship   **August 2024-Present**
• Academic Merit Stipend

Drexel Dean's Fellowship   **September 2023-March 2024**
• Academic Merit Scholarship of $6,000

Drexel Dean's Fellowship   **September 2022-June 2023**
• Academic Merit Scholarship of $9,000

Erasmus Student Network Scholarship   **September 2021-December 2021**
• Academic Merit Travel Award of $1,100

Peer Reviewed Publications in Preparation

Hessler, C.M., Worwag, K.E., Ananna, T., Juarascio, A.S., LaFata, E.M. (In Preparation). Intake of ultra-processed foods during meals predicts food intake during binge episodes in adults with binge-type eating disorders.

Worwag, K.E., Derrigo, K.E., Hessler, C.M., LaFata, E.M. (In preparation). Food Addiction and Dietary Preferences in Adults with Binge-Spectrum Eating Disorders.

Worwag, K.E., Audrain-McGovern, J.E., Butryn, M.B., LaFata, E.M. (Under Review). The role of physical activity, calorie and macronutrient intake on smoking cessation abstinence.

Peer Reviewed Publications

LaFata, E.M., **Worwag, K.**, Derrigo, K., Hessler, C., Allison, K.C., Juarascio, A.S., & Gearhardt, A.N. (2024). Development of the Food Addiction Symptom Inventory: The first clinical interview to assess ultra-processed food addiction. *Psychological Assessment*. 10.1037/pas0001340.

Conference Presentations

Corso, M., Hessler, C.M., Chwyl, C., **Worwag, K.E.**, LaFata, E.M. (2024, March). *Evaluating UPF Withdrawal In Real-Time During Dietary Change Interventions*. [Poster Presentation]. 2024 Eastern Psychological Association, Philadelphia, PA, United States.

Worwag, K.E., Derrigo, K.E., Hessler, C.M., LaFata, E.M. (2024, February). E*xploring the Addictive Potential of Foods in Binge-Spectrum Eating Disorders*. [Poster Presentation]. 2024 American Association for the Advancement of Science, Denver, CO, United States.

Worwag, K.E., Audrain-McGovern, J.E., Butryn, M.B., LaFata, E.M. (2024, March). *Lifestyle Modification for Smoking Cessation: Do Diet and Physical Activity Predict Smoking Abstinence?* [Poster Presentation]. 2024 Society of Behavioral Medicine, Philadelphia, PA, United States.

Worwag, K.E., Audrain-McGovern, J.E., Butryn, M.B., LaFata, E.M. (2023, October 17). *Behavioral Activation for Health Behavior Changes in Adults who Smoke* [Poster Presentation]. 2023 Obesity Week Annual Conference, Dallas, TX, United States.

Research Experience

Graduate Research Assistant   **August 2022-Present**
Center for Weight, Eating Lifestyle Science (WELL Center)
Drexel University, Philadelphia, PA
Mentor: Erica LaFata, PhD

> **Biobehavioral Reward Responses Associated with Consumption of Nutritionally Diverse Ultra-Processed Foods (Project Response)**
> Funding source: K23 funded by National Institute of Health (K23DK129825)
> Project description: This study examines the subjective and physiological responses of adults with overweight/obesity to different food types, particularly ultra-processed foods, to better understand their impact on eating behaviors and overall health.
>
> **Responsibilities:**
> - Actively manage project startup by submitting IRB amendments, contributing to the Manual of Procedures, creating organizational spreadsheets to track progress and setting up the study devices (laptop and FitBit).
> - Conduct lit searches to choose appropriate, reliable self-report measures and create them on REDCap.
> - Use branching logic, survey queue and automated invitations on REDCap to create user-friendly surveys.

• Draft and pilot assessment protocols prior to participant recruitment.
• Program Ecological Momentary Assessment (EMA) surveys on Ethica by using
   triggering logic to time surveys for each assessment point.
• Program, pilot and debug behavioral tasks on Inquisit and E-Prime.
• Leadership role in project supervision, including the training of six incoming RAs in
   EMA monitoring, REDCap utilization, and in-person assessments, as well as training
   assessors to conduct the Food Addiction Symptom Inventory (FASI).

The First Systematic Examination of and Intervention for Ultra-Processed Food Withdrawal (Project SWAP)
Funding source: WELL Center Seed Funding
Project description: This study assesses if eliminating ultra-processed foods from one's diet without reducing calorie intake leads to withdrawal-like physical and psychological symptoms in order to examine the feasibility and acceptance of an intervention to help individuals cope with withdrawal symptoms and adhere to a diet free of ultra-processed foods.

Responsibilities:
• Train clinicians on EMA survey monitoring.
• Debug and pilot EMA surveys on Ethica.
• Troubleshoot tech issues with EMA surveys.
• Program surveys on REDCap.

Mentor: Meghan Butryn, PhD

Sharing Digital Self-Monitoring Data with Others to Enhance Long-Term Weight Loss: A Randomized Trial using a Factorial Design (Project Fitlink)
Funding source: R01 funded by National Institute of Health (R01DK129300)
Project description: Randomized control trial investigating the effectiveness of data sharing to increase skill uptake of daily weighing and self-monitoring for adult weight loss and maintenance.

Responsibilities:
• Assessment data tracking (downloading and cleaning raw data, troubleshooting data
   deviations, contacting participants to encourage assessment completion).
• Build and maintain study databases.
• Use branching logic, survey queue and automated invitations on REDCap to create
   user-friendly surveys.
• Data and Safety Monitoring Plan (DSMP) reporting.
• Daily project management tasks (checking emails, sending surveys, Calendly invites).
• Tech setup and maintenance (troubleshooting Fitbit and Withings Scale device
   malfunctions).

Intervention to reduce ultra-processed food intake (UPF Pilot Study)
Funding source: WELL Center Seed Funding
Project description: Pilot study investigating the feasibility and acceptability of an 8-week intervention meant to reduce ultra-processed food intake.

Responsibilities:
- Schedule, screen and consent participants.
- Conduct baseline assessments, including administration of the ASA24 recall.

Intervention to reduce ultra-processed food intake (Project Health)
Funding source: WELL Center Seed Funding
Project description: Study designed to improve HbA1c levels for young adults (aged 17-20) who have recently been diagnosed with pre-diabetes to reduce the onset of Type 2 Diabetes.

Responsibilities:
- Conduct BodPod Scans to measure body composition.
- Schedule participants for upcoming assessments.

Mentor: Stephanie Manasse, PhD

Wellness Achieved Through Changing Habits (WATCH): An Acceptance-Based Healthy Lifestyle Intervention for Diverse Adolescents (Project WATCH)
Funding source: NIH/NHLBI R61/R33
Project description: This study tests the feasibility and acceptability of incorporating a six month acceptance-based therapy (ABT) weight loss intervention for adolescent girls with overweight/obesity, assessing for changes in BMI z-score, body fat, improved blood pressure and blood lipids.

Responsibilities:
- Draft assessment manuals for both the ABT and health education groups.
- Collect finger prick blood samples at study assessments (Phlebotomy certified).

Does aberrant decision making prevent success in adolescent behavioral weight loss treatment? (Project REACH)
Funding source: K23 funded by National Institute of Health (K23DK124514)
Project description: Healthy lifestyle and weight loss group intervention study for adolescents ages 14-18 that examines whether decision-making processes are associated with weight loss outcomes in adolescence.

Responsibilities:
- Weekly messaging check-ins with adolescents to encourage weighing and dietary self-monitoring.
- Screen and schedule participants.
- Troubleshoot tech issues with Fitbit, Aria Air and Google Classroom.
- Manage device shipment and return.
- Coordinate data management, including syntax writing and data cleaning.
- Attend weekly supervision.
- Mentorship of an mPOWER fellowship student, including teaching SPSS syntax, self-report measure scoring and participant communication.

Does targeting sleep improve self-regulation in adolescents with binge eating? A case series study (Project RESET)

Funding source: WELL Center Seed Funding
Project description: This study tests the feasibility and acceptability of incorporating a 4-week Cognitive Behavioral Therapy for Insomnia (CBT-I) module into a 12-week Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CBT) program for adolescents (aged 12-18) with binge eating.

Responsibilities:
- Data cleaning and management.
- Manage device shipment and return.

Undergraduate Research Assistant   **August 2021-January 2022**
Arizona State University, Tempe, AZ
Mentor: Cheryl Conrad, PhD

Behavioral Neuroscience Research in Stress
Lab description: Aim to understand the mechanisms through which stress affects brain plasticity and resilience, with a specific focus on the influence of gonadal hormones, sex differences, and aging, using rodent models.

Responsibilities:
- Score behavioral tasks including the sucrose preference task, elevated-plus maze, and Morris Water Maze.
- Draw hippocampal CA3 neurons under the microscope.

Clinical Experience

Behavioral Weight Loss Group Leader   **February 2022-Present**
Center for Weight, Eating Lifestyle Science (WELL Center)
Drexel University, Philadelphia, PA
Supervisors: Meghan Butyrn, PhD and Nikki Crane, MS

Responsibilities:
- Co-lead 24 month behavioral weight loss intervention group.
- Teach behavioral weight loss skills, such as daily weighing, dietary intake recommendations and physical activity goals.
- Provide evidence-based strategies to enhance individual's abilities to overcome barriers to dietary changes and self-monitoring
- Maintain a safe group environment in order to foster open communication, trust, and support among individuals.
- Attend regular supervision.

Clinical Research Assessor   **July 2023-Present**
Center for Weight, Eating Lifestyle Science (WELL Center)
Drexel University, Philadelphia, PA
Supervisors: Meghan Butyrn, PhD

Responsibilities:
- Conduct the ASA24 on adults interested in reducing their intake of ultra-processed

food.
- Conduct phone screens and baseline assessments.

Clinical Research Assessor   **March 2023-Present**
Center for Weight, Eating Lifestyle Science (WELL Center)
Drexel University, Philadelphia, PA
Supervisors: Stephanie Manasse, PhD

    Responsibilities:
- Conduct phone screens with both adolescents and parents to determine eligibility for current studies.
- Conduct Baseline Assessments, including administration of self-report measures and behavioral tasks (Delay Discounting Task [DDT], Stop Signal Task [SST], Ideal Portion Size [IPS], California Card Sorting Task [CCST], Wisconsin Card Sorting Task [WCST]).
- Offer clinical insight during supervision.

Clinical Research Assessor   **January 2023-Present**
Center for Weight, Eating Lifestyle Science (WELL Center)
Drexel University, Philadelphia, PA
Supervisors: Erica LaFata, PhD

    Responsibilities:
- Conduct the Food Addiction Symptom Inventory (FASI) to assess for food addiction.
- Conduct Clinic Visits to determine final eligibility.
- Administer crisis intervention to assess for active suicidal ideation and implement an action plan to support the at-risk individual.

Clinical Research Assessor   **September 2022-February 2023**
Center for Weight, Eating Lifestyle Science (WELL Center)
Drexel University, Philadelphia, PA
Supervisors: Meghan Butyrn, PhD

    Responsibilities:
- Conduct the Eating Disorder Diagnostic Interview (EDDI) on young adults aged 17-20.
- Administer crisis intervention to assess for active suicidal ideation and implement an action plan to support the at-risk individual.

Work Experience

Student Mentor   **August 2020-January 2021**
University of Groningen, Groningen, Netherlands
Supervisor: Diana te Braake

    Responsibilities:
- Foster a safe and supportive environment for first-year students transitioning to life at university and in the Netherlands.

- Organize biweekly meetings to inform students on academic and non-academic topics, offer support.

Studies and Certifications

Drexel University

BioRaft Training   **January 2023**
Basic Laboratory Safety Training

Collaborative Institutional Training Initiative (CITI) Program   **August 2022**
Social & Behavioral Research - Basic/Refresher Course

PSY 550: Multicultural Perspectives in Clinical Psychology   **Spring Quarter 2022**
Apply theoretical frameworks and clinical case considerations to clients of multicultural and intersectional identities.

PSY 720: Health Psychology   **Winter Quarter 2022**
Interdisciplinary perspective on the interplay between psychology and health (i.e. health care system, policies, overall well-being).

Arizona State University

BIO 201: Human Anatomy and Physiology I   **Fall Semester 2021**
Understand processes underlying the bodily (i.e. nervous, digestive, muscular, skeletal) systems.

NEU 307: Your Brain on Drugs   **Fall Semester 2021**
Explore the effect of different pharmacological substances on the nervous system and body.

Skills & Languages

Data cleaning and analysis
• Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS v. 28)
• Jamovi
• HLM 8.2

Behavioral task programming, debugging and testing
• E-Prime (Relative Reinforcing Value of Food [RRV] Task)
• Inquisit (Stop Signal Reaction Time Task [SSRT], Implicit Attitudes Task [IAT], Stroop Task, Delay Discounting Task [DDT])

Ecological Momentary Assessment (EMA) programming, debugging, piloting
• Ethica (building a new project that included programming daily and momentary surveys, debugging and piloting the project)

Data collection
• REDCap (creating new instruments with accurate branching logic, survey flow and automated invites)
• Qualtrics
• Phlebotomy certified (Vacuum-assisted and butterfly needle)

Languages

• German: Fluent
• French: Proficient

Professional Affiliations and Activities

Professional Memberships

American Psychological Association, 2023 – Present
The Obesity Society, 2023 – Present
Society of Behavioral Medicine, 2024 – Present

References

Dr. Erica LaFata
Assistant Research Professor, Drexel University Psychology Department
Email: es3344@drexel.edu
Phone: 913.653.5022

Dr. Meghan Butryn
Research Professor, Drexel University Psychology Department
Email: mlb34@drexel.edu
Phone: 215.553.7108

Dr. Janet Audrain-McGovern
Research Professor, Perelman School of Medicine, University of Pennsylvania
Email: audrain@pennmedicine.upenn.edu
Phone: 215.746.7145

Dr. Stephanie Manasse
Assistant Research Professor, Drexel University Psychology Department
Email: smm522@drexel.edu
Phone: 215.553.7157