

TAIYLOR R. RAYFORD

Department of Educational Psychology, Developmental Sciences Division

University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign

Taylor2@illinois.edu

EDUCATION

- | | |
|--------------|--|
| 2020-present | Doctor of Philosophy (Ph.D.)
Educational Psychology: Developmental Sciences
University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign |
| 2020-2023 | Master of Science (M.S.)
Educational Psychology
University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign |
| 2020-2023 | Bachelor of Science (B.S.)
Psychology
The Ohio State University |

FELLOWSHIPS, GRANTS, AND AWARDS

- | | |
|------|---|
| 2023 | Ray Simpson Memorial Fund (\$750)
Award based on academic merit, professional experience, public service, and commitment to the field of Education (3 rd rank). |
| 2023 | Bureau of Ed. Conference Participation Award (\$500)
Award to support student and faculty participation in a major research conference. |
| 2023 | Department of Ed. Psychology Block Grant (\$600)
Supports departmental efforts to recruit and retain outstanding graduate students. |
| 2022 | Graduate College Professional Development (\$1,000)
Award to support activities that advance doctoral students' professional and academic goals. |
| 2022 | Association for Psychological Sciences Student Diversity Registration Award
Award intended to offset the cost of attending the APS convention for students from underrepresented groups in psychological science. |

- 2020 **Graduate College Block Grant (\$200)**
Supports college efforts to recruit and retain outstanding graduate students.
- 2020 **Summer Predoctoral Institute Fellowship (\$2,500)**
Provides incoming graduate students an early introduction to graduate study and an opportunity to engage with research.
- 2020-2023 **Aspire Illinois Fellowship (Approx. \$50,000/year)**
Doctoral recruitment fellowship for students who excel academically and who might not have access otherwise.

PEER-REVIEWED PUBLICATIONS

Conference Proceedings

Rayford, T., Jeng, A., Ruedas-Gracia, N., & Song, D. (2023). *Belonging Fulfillment: Are Universities Meeting the Expectations of Their Students?* Proceedings of the 2023 AERA Annual Meeting. <https://doi.org/10.3102/20062622><https://doi.org/10.3102/20062622>

Rayford, T., Ruedas-Gracia, N., Goldstein, M., Schimpf, C., Herbert, L., Escamilla, L., & Zavala, J. (2022). *Educational Enrichment: The Benefits of Near-Peer Mentoring for Undergraduate Engineering Students*. 129th ASEE Annual Conference & Exposition.

Peer-Reviewed Manuscripts

Ruedas-Gracia, N., Sun, S., **Rayford, T.,** Jiang, G., Wu, L., & Maghsoodi, A.H. (2024). Taking it Day by Day: Reasons for Daily Changes in University Belonging. *Emerging Adulthood*, 21676968241260083. <https://doi.org/10.1177/21676968241260083>

Rayford, T., Jeng, A., Ruedas-Gracia, N., & Song, D. (2024). What did you expect?": The extent to which universities fulfill college students' expectations about belonging [Under review]

Wu, L., Jiang, G., Ruedas-Gracia, N., **Rayford, T.,** & Sun, S. (2023). *Investigating the Factor Structure of the Sense of Social Fit Scale: A Multilevel Bifactor Study* [Under review]

PRESENTATIONS

Oral Presentation

Wu, L., Jiang, G., Ruedas-Gracia, N., **Rayford, T.,** & Sun, S. (2023, June). Investigating the Factor Structure of Sense of Social and Academic Fit Scale: A Multilevel Bifactor Study [Paper Presentation]. Modern Modeling Methods Conference, University of Connecticut.

Rayford, T. (2023, April). *What Did You Expect? The Importance of Expectations and a Sense of Belonging* [Lightning Talk]. University of Illinois Graduate College Research Live, Champaign, IL.

Rayford, T. (2022, May). Understanding Sense of Belonging Among Black Students. In Christianson, K. (Chair) *Flipping the Script: Using Racialized Experiences at Predominantly White Institutions to Interrogate Classic Models of Psychological Theories* [Symposium]. Association for Psychological Science Annual Convention, Chicago, IL.

Rayford, T. (2022, May). *A Phenomenological Approach to Understanding Black Graduate Students' Sense of Belonging to Their Program. Higher-education Studies Involving Specific-campus Populations and Groups* [Panel Presentation]. International Conference of Qualitative Inquiry, Champaign, IL.

Poster Presentations

Sun, S., **Rayford, T.**, & Wu, L. (2023, May). *The Intersectionality of Racial/Ethnic Identity and Generations in the U.S. on People's Sense of Belonging to the United States* [Poster Presentation]. Association for Psychological Science Annual Convention, Washington, D.C.

Ruedas-Gracia, N., Sun, S., **Rayford, T.**, Jiang, G., Wu, L., & Maghsoodi, A. (2022, August). *Sense of University Belonging Patterns Over Time Among College Students: A Mixed Method Study* [Poster presentation]. American Psychological Association Conference, Minneapolis, MN.

Rayford, T., Jeng, A., & Ruedas-Gracia, N., (2022, May). *(Un)Fulfilled Belonging Among College Students* [Poster presentation]. Graduate Student Conference, Champaign, IL.

Sun, S., **Rayford, T.**, Ruedas-Gracia, N. (2021, May). *Sense of Belonging Patterns Over Time.* [Poster Presentation]. American Psychological Science Virtual Convention.

RESEARCH EXPERIENCE

Graduate Student Project Evaluator

August 2023-Present

University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign

Lead Evaluator: Dr. Cherie M. Avent

- Developed a developmental evaluation plan for a trauma-informed education program.
- Written and presented end-of-year evaluation report to stakeholders.

Graduate Research Assistant

January 2023-May 2023

University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign

Principal Investigator: Dr. Aixa D. Marchand

- Conducted a literature review related to a school district's history with segregation and integration.
- Assisted with the IRB process.

Graduate Research Assistant

July 2021 to June 2022

Gracia Lab, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign

Principal Investigator: Dr. Molly H. Goldstein

- Investigated the experiences of undergraduates teaching in a middle school summer STEAM workshop, and the benefits of near-peer mentoring.
- Collected, analyzed, and disseminated qualitative findings to university stakeholders and at a national conference.

Graduate Research Assistant

June 2020 to Present

Gracia Lab, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign

Principal Investigator: Dra. Nidia Ruedas-Gracia

- Investigated longitudinal changes of sense of belonging among university students via mixed methods and daily diaries
- Collected literature review sources on sense of belonging over time.
- Trained members of the research team on using methodologies.
- Responsible for developing and managing recruitment, surveys, and interview questions.

TEACHING AND MENTORING EXPERIENCE

Teaching Assistant – Intro. to Ed. Psychology

August 2022 to December 2022

August 2023 to Present

Department of Educational Psychology, University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign

- Leads a weekly 2-hour discussion section of approx. 20 students per semester.
- Evaluated student submissions, providing feedback on weekly assignments, group projects, and final examinations.
- Rated Excellent by students in the end-of-semester evaluation (Fall 2022).

Supervisor for Undergraduate Honors Research

August 2022 to May 2023

- Mentored an undergraduate students for a minimum of 50 hours of research.

- Met weekly with an undergraduate mentee to work on research goals.

Undergraduate Research Apprentice Program

August 2021 to May 2022

- Attended monthly training on how to mentor research students.
- Met weekly with an undergraduate mentee to work on program and research goals.
- Assisted in their end-of-year poster presentation at an undergraduate research symposium.

Invite Speaking Engagements

EPSY 575 Mixed Method Inquiry

October 2022

RELEVANT EXPERIENCE

Academic Coach

November 2021 to Present

Disability Resources & Educational Services, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign

- Coaching students on how to assess their academic needs.
- Coaching students on proper techniques and skills to attain goals.
- Refer students to appropriate campus sources as needed.
- Track student progress.

Community Manager

August 2018 to May 2020

Dining services, Ohio State University

- Developed various programs and presentations to promote diversity and inclusion within the workspace.
- Conducted frequent surveys and interviews to evaluate the effectiveness of programs and employee satisfaction.
- Implemented feedback to improve programs and employee satisfaction.

ACADEMIC SERVICE

2023-Present

Educational Psychology Executive Committee.

2023

College of Ed. Graduate Student Network Committee.

2022-2023

College of Ed. Graduate Student Conference Committee.

2022-Present

Black Graduate Student Association Executive Board.

Positions held: secretary (2022-2023) membership chair(2022-2023), and Vice President(2023-2024).

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Incorporated.

Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority is an international service organization dedicated to serving communities in need.

2022 **Education Signature Program Committee.** I help plan, organize, and facilitate educational programs for high school students that focus on assisting high schools through the college admission process (#CAP).

LIFELONG LEARNING

Graduate Certificate in Evaluation (Expected May 2025)

Hilliard-Sizemore Course on African Americans and Education (April 2023)

Graduate College Mentoring Certificate (April 2022)