

MICHAELA RODRIGUEZ

3232 EAST HALL, 530 CHURCH STREET, ANN ARBOR, MI
rodrim@umich.edu • 1-347-407-3589

updated 1/8/26

EDUCATION

2021-2026 (exp.) **University of Michigan**
Ph.D. in Psychology (Social Area)
Advisors: Ethan Kross, Ph.D.; Amie M. Gordon, Ph.D.

2021-2023 **University of Michigan**
M.S. in Psychology

2016-2020 **Harvard University, magna cum laude**
B.A. in Psychology, *highest departmental honors*
Advisor: Richard J. McNally, Ph.D.

EMPLOYMENT

2020-2021 **Columbia University Irving Medical Center**
Department of Psychiatry & New York State Psychiatric Institute

RESEARCH INTERESTS

Loneliness; Solitude; Social Connection; Emotion; Health & Well-Being; Culture; Technology

HONORS, AWARDS, & FELLOWSHIPS

RESEARCH

2025 **Summer Institute for Social and Personality Psychology, SPSP**

2025 **Nan Donald Award, UMich**
Awarded to support a qualitative project on perceptions of solitude across cultures

2024 **Robert B. Zajonc Scholar Award, UMich**
Awarded to support cross-cultural research on social isolation, loneliness, and health leveraging an extensive dataset containing over 350,000 participants across 58 nations

2024 **Pillsbury Graduate Research Award, UMich**
Awarded to support the development of a novel evidence-based loneliness intervention

2023 **Philip Brickman Memorial Prize, UMich**
Awarded to the best graduate student research paper published in the Social Psychology Area (for “Sensory Emotion Regulation” in *Trends in Cognitive Sciences*)

2023 **Patricia Gurin Research Award, UMich**
Awarded to support an innovative research proposal on identity, diversity, and self-control

2023 **Rackham Graduate Student Research Grant, UMich**

2023 **Pittsburgh Summer Methodology Series Training Award, UMich**
For intensive workshops in dyadic data analysis and multilevel modeling for longitudinal data

2022 **Rackham Graduate Student Research Grant, UMich**
Awarded to support research for doctoral pre-candidates

2022 **Institute for Social Research Summer Training Award, UMich**
For intensive summer statistical training in multilevel modeling

2022 **Ruth Hamill Graduate Student Research Award, UMich**
Awarded to a social psychology graduate student with a promising research proposal

2022 **National Science Foundation Graduate Research Fellowship Program - Honorable Mention**

2020 **Gordon W. Allport Prize, Harvard University**
Awarded to an outstanding senior honors thesis in the area of social psychology

2019 **Harvard College Research Program Grant**
To fund in-person data collection for an original senior honors thesis experiment

2019 **Harvard College Research Program Travel Grant**
To support summer travel to Nairobi, Kenya to conduct a peer-led mental health intervention

TEACHING & MENTORING

2025 **Outstanding Graduate Student Instructor Award, Rackham Graduate School, UMich**
 Recognizes <1% of graduate students across the university who demonstrate outstanding dedication and excellence as teachers

2024 **Outstanding Graduate Student Instructor Award, Department of Psychology, UMich**
 Awarded annually to a graduate student in Psychology for demonstrating excellence, creativity, and intellectual engagement in undergraduate teaching

2023 **Outstanding Undergraduate Research Mentor Award, UMich**
 Awarded to 2% of graduate students for excellence in mentoring undergraduates to conduct independent scholarly research through the Undergraduate Research Opportunity Program

SCHOLARSHIP

2021-26 **Rackham Merit Fellowship, UMich**
 Competitive supplemental graduate funding for underrepresented students who demonstrate academic excellence and dedication to diversity

2020 **Phi Beta Kappa, Harvard University**
 Awarded to the top 10% of Harvard graduates for outstanding academic achievement

2018-19 **John Harvard Scholar**
 Awarded to the top 5% of Harvard undergraduates for academic excellence

FEDERAL GRANTS

2025-26 NIH Plasticity of Well-Being Network, Secondary Data Analysis Grant (Co-Investigator; PIs Drs. Ethan Kross & Alexandra Wormley, \$30,000). *Examining the Role of Culture in the Links Between Loneliness, Social Isolation, and Health.*

PEER-REVIEWED PUBLICATIONS

17. Guevarra, D. A., **Rodriguez, M.**, & McNally, R. J. (In Press). Low-effort emotion regulation: Implications for depression and anxiety. *Clinical Psychology: Science and Practice*.

16. Wormley, A. S., Vornlocher, C., Baldwin, C. R., & **Rodriguez, M.** (2025). Beliefs about God buffer against the health risks of loneliness and social isolation in six major religious groups and 22 countries. *Scientific Reports*, 15, 37187. <https://doi.org/10.1038/s41598-025-12672-6>

15. **Rodriguez, M.**, Schertz, K. E., & Kross, E. (2025). How people think about being alone shapes their experience of loneliness. *Nature Communications*, 16, 1594. <https://doi.org/10.1038/s41467-025-56764-3>

Featured in *BBC News*, *The Independent*, *University of Michigan News*, *National Public Radio*

14. **Rodriguez, M.** & Campbell, S. W. (2025). Re-evaluating solitude: A Nietzschean perspective. *The Journal of Positive Psychology*, 20(5), 878-888. <https://doi.org/10.1080/17439760.2025.2519296>

13. **Rodriguez, M.** & Campbell, S. W. (2025). From ‘isolation’ to ‘me-time’: Linguistic shifts enhance solitary experiences. *Cognition and Emotion*, 1-21. <https://doi.org/10.1080/02699931.2024.2445080>

12. Nguyen, T. T. & **Rodriguez, M.** (2024). Deconstructing solitude and its links to well-being. *Social and Personality Psychology Compass*, e70020. <https://doi.org/10.1111/spc.3.70020>

11. **Rodriguez, M.**, & Kross, E. (2023). Sensory emotion regulation. *Trends in Cognitive Sciences*, 27(4), 370-390. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tics.2023.01.008>

Received Brickman Award for best paper in the Social Psychology Area at Michigan

Featured in *The Washington Post*

10. **Rodriguez, M.**, Pratt, S., Bellet, B. W., McNally, R. J. (2023). Solitude can be good if you see it as such: Reappraisal helps lonely people experience solitude more positively. *Journal of Personality*, 93(1), 118-135. <https://doi.org/10.1111/jopy.12887>

9. **Rodriguez, M.**, Aalbers, G., & McNally, R. J. (2022). Idiographic network models of social media use and depression symptoms. *Cognitive Therapy and Research*, 46(1), 124-132. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10608-021-10236-2>

8. **Rodriguez, M.**, Osborn, T. L., Gan, J., Weisz, J. R., & Bellet, B. W. (2022). Loneliness in Kenyan adolescents: Socio-cultural factors and network association with depression and anxiety symptoms. *Transcultural Psychiatry*, 59(6), 797-809. <https://doi.org/10.1177/13634615221099143>

7. Lam, P., Simpson, D., John, D., **Rodriguez, M.**, Bridgman-Packer, D., O'Neill, M., & Lewis-Fernández, R. (2022). Differential engagement by race/ethnicity in experimental trials of mental health treatment interventions: A systematic review. *Journal of Clinical Psychiatry*, 83(6), 21r14343. <https://doi.org/10.4088/JCP.21r14343>

6. Osborn, T. L., Venturo, K., Gan, J., **Rodriguez, M.**, Alemu, R., Roe, E., Arango, S., Wasil, A., Campbell, S., Weisz, J. R., Wasanga, C. (2022). Depression and anxiety symptoms amongst Kenyan adolescents: Psychometric properties, prevalence rates, and associations with psychological well-being and sociodemographic factors. *Research on Child and Adolescent Psychopathology*, 50(11), 1471-1485. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10802-022-00940-2>

5. Venturo-Conerly, K. E., Osborn, T. L., Alemu, R., Roe, E., **Rodriguez, M.**, Gan, J., Arango, S., Wasil, A., Wasanga, C., Weisz, J. R. (2022). Single-session interventions for adolescent anxiety and depression symptoms in Kenya: A cluster-randomized controlled trial. *Behaviour Research and Therapy*, 151, 104040. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.brat.2022.104040>

4. Osborn, T. L., Venturo-Conerly, K. E., Arango, S. G., Roe, E., **Rodriguez, M.**.... Weisz, J. R. (2021). The Shamiri group intervention for adolescent anxiety and depression in Sub-Saharan Africa: A randomized clinical trial. *JAMA Psychiatry*, 78(8), 829-837. <https://doi.org/10.1001/jamapsychiatry.2021.1129>

3. **Rodriguez, M.**, Bellet, B. W., & McNally, R. J. (2020). Reframing time spent alone: Reappraisal buffers the emotional effects of isolation. *Cognitive Therapy and Research*, 44, 1052-1067. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10608-020-10128-x>

Featured in *Psychology Today*, *El País*

2. Osborn, T. L., **Rodriguez, M.**, Wasil, A. R. Venturo-Conerly, K. E., ... & Weisz, J. R., (2020). Single session digital intervention for adolescent depression, anxiety, and well-being: Outcomes of a randomized controlled trial with Kenyan adolescents. *Journal of Consulting and Clinical Psychology*, 88(7), 657-668. <https://doi.org/10.1037/ccp0000505>

1. Osborn, T. L., Venturo-Conerly, K. E., Wasil, A. R., **Rodriguez, M.**, Roe, E., Arango, S., Alemu, R., Gan, J., Schleider, J. L., & Weisz, J. R. (2020). The Shamiri group intervention for adolescent anxiety and depression: Study protocol for a randomized controlled trial of a lay provider-delivered, school-based intervention in Kenya. *Trials*, 21, 938. <https://doi.org/10.1186/s13063-020-04732-1>

BOOK CHAPTERS

Rodriguez, M., Motyl, M., & Schroeder, J. (In Press). From social media to empathic artificial intelligence: Applying past lessons to future technologies. In Perry, A. & Cameron, C. D. (Eds), *Empathy and Artificial Intelligence: Challenges, Advances, and Ethical Considerations*. Cambridge University Press.

REGISTERED REPORTS

Rodriguez, M., Diamond, E., From, A., Gordon, A. M., & Feinberg, M. The effects of AI companions on psychological well-being, social life, and interpersonal attitudes and behaviors: An 8-month experimental study. **Stage 1 Registered Report** accepted in principle at *Nature Human Behaviour*.

MANUSCRIPTS UNDER REVISION

* Indicates shared first authorship

Rodriguez, M.*, Baldwin, C. R. *, Wormley, A., Vornlocher, C., Kross, E., Tamir, M., & Kitayama, S. Culture shapes the links between loneliness, living alone, and health across 58 nations. *Nature Communications*.

MANUSCRIPTS UNDER REVIEW

Rodriguez, M., Campbell, S. W., & Gordon, A. M. The future of social (dis)connection. Invited to special issue on “Psychology in 2125—A Century Forward” in *Perspectives on Psychological Science*.

INVITED MANUSCRIPTS IN PREPARATION

Rodriguez, M., Hatzenbueler, M., Cagney, K. A., & Kross, E. Rethinking loneliness: Beyond the absence of others. Perspective article invited to *Nature*.

Baldwin, C. R., **Rodriguez, M.**, Mendes, W. B., & McNally, R. J. The body as a fundamental system of emotion regulation. Review article invited to *Trends in Cognitive Sciences*.

CONFERENCE TALKS

Rodriguez, M. (2026, February). “Culture Shapes the Health Risks of Living Alone and Loneliness Across 58 Nations.” Talk in **Chaired Symposium**, “Solitude in a Social World: Context Matters” at the 2026 Society for Personality and Social Psychology (SPSP) Annual Convention, Chicago, IL.

Rodriguez, M. (2025, July) “Harnessing the Power of Solitude: A Novel Intervention to Combat Loneliness.” Talk in **Symposium**, “New Approaches to Address Social Disconnection” at the Summer Institute for Social and Personality Psychology (SISPP), Northwestern University, Evanston, IL.

Rodriguez, M. & Kross, E. (2025, March) “Sensory Emotion Regulation.” Talk in **Symposium**, “New Perspectives on Effort in Emotion Regulation” at the 2025 Society for Affective Science (SAS) Annual Convention, Portland, OR.

Rodriguez, M. Diamond, E., From, A., Gordon, A. M., & Feinberg, M. (2025, March) “Interacting with an AI Companion Promotes Emotional Well-Being Across Seven Weeks.” Data Blitz at the 2025 Society for Affective Science (SAS) Annual Convention, Emotion Regulation Pre-Conference, Portland, OR.

Rodriguez, M., Schertz, K. E., & Kross, E. (2024, May) “Lonely or Just Alone? Beliefs Shape Experiences of Being Alone.” Talk in **Symposium**, “Innovative Tools to Address the Loneliness Epidemic: Leveraging Affective, Cognitive, and Behavioral Processes” at the 2024 Association for Psychological Science (APS) Annual Convention, San Francisco, CA.

Rodriguez, M. (2024, February) “Lonely or Just Alone? Beliefs Shape Experiences of Being Alone.” Talk in **Chaired Symposium**, “Time Alone: An Asset or Liability to Well-Being?” (Co-Chair: Ethan Kross) at the 2024 Society for Personality and Social Psychology (SPSP) Annual Convention, San Diego, CA.

Rodriguez, M. (2023, May) “The Importance of Disentangling Loneliness from Time Spent Alone.” Talk in **Symposium**, “Leveraging Multimodal Data and Methods to Understand Loneliness, its Consequences, and its Treatment” at the 2023 Association for Psychological Science (APS) Annual Convention, D.C.

Rodriguez, M. (2023, February) “Understanding the Links Between Social Media Use and Depression: A Longitudinal and Idiographic Approach.” Data Blitz presented at the 2023 Society for Personality and Social Psychology (SPSP) Annual Convention, Media and Technology Pre-Conference, Atlanta, GA.

INVITED TALKS

2025 USC (Social Area Brown Bag Speaker Series, Department of Psychology)
 UCLA (Social Area Brown Bag Speaker Series, Department of Psychology)
 University of Toronto (Affective Science and Health Laboratory, Department of Psychology)
 Michigan State University (Social Area Brown Bag Speaker Series, Department of Psychology)
 Ross School of Business, University of Michigan (Management & Organizations Area Seminar)
 University of Michigan (Clinical Area Brown Bag Speaker Series, Department of Psychology)
 University of Michigan (Personality & Social Contexts Speaker Series, Department of Psychology)
 University of Michigan (Patricia Gurin Lecture Series, Department of Psychology)
 Center for Positive Organizations (Adderley Research Incubator)
 Linfield University (Social Area Brown Bag Speaker Series, Department of Psychology)

POPULAR WRITING

Rodriguez, M., Pratt, S., & Bellet., B. W. (2023, November) Improving our relationship to being alone. *Character & Context Blog, Society for Personality and Social Psychology (SPSP)*.

ADVANCED TRAINING

- 2024 *Designing Ambulatory Assessment Studies* (SMaRT Workshop, Dr. Aidan Wright)
- 2023 *Dyadic Longitudinal Analysis* (University of Pittsburgh, Drs. Amie Gordon & Kate Thorson)
- 2023 *Longitudinal Multilevel Modeling* (University of Pittsburgh, Dr. Aidan Wright)
- 2022 *Multilevel Models: An Introduction* (ICPSR, University of Michigan, Dr. Mark Manning)

SELECT MEDIA COVERAGE

- 2025 *BBC News; The Independent; University of Michigan News; National Public Radio*
- 2023 *The Washington Post, Everyday Health, Medium, El País, Psychology Today*

TEACHING EXPERIENCE

DEPARTMENT OF PSYCHOLOGY, UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

UNDERGRADUATE COURSES	RATING
FALL 2024 <i>Psychology of Close Relationships</i> , Graduate Student Instructor	4.9/5.0
WINTER 2024 <i>Cultural Psychology</i> , Graduate Student Instructor	5.0/5.0
FALL 2023 <i>Intro to Psychology</i> , Graduate Student Instructor	4.8/5.0
WINTER 2023 <i>Organizational Psychology</i> , Graduate Student Instructor	5.0/5.0
FALL 2022 <i>Intro to Social Psychology</i> , Graduate Student Instructor	5.0/5.0
WINTER 2022 <i>Intro to Social Psychology</i> , Graduate Student Instructor	4.9/5.0

MANAGEMENT AND ORGANIZATIONS, ROSS SCHOOL OF BUSINESS, UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

UNDERGRADUATE COURSES

- WINTER 2024 *Leading Yourself & Managing Your Professional Relationships*, Grader & Tutor
- WINTER 2023 *Leading Yourself & Managing Your Professional Relationships*, Grader & Tutor

GRADUATE COURSES

- FALL 2024 *Negotiations* (Executive MBA), Teaching Assistant & Grader
- FALL 2021 *Intro to Management & Organizations* (MBA), Teaching Assistant

INVITED GUEST LECTURES, UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

- FALL 2024 “The Rise of AI Companions.” *Psychology of Close Relationships*
- WINTER 2024 “Culture and Emotion.” *Cultural Psychology*
- WINTER 2024 “How You Think About Being Alone Shapes Your Experience of Loneliness.” *Leading Yourself and Managing Your Professional Relationships*
- WINTER 2023 “How You Think About Being Alone Shapes Your Experience of Loneliness.” *Leading Yourself and Managing Your Professional Relationships*

MENTORING EXPERIENCE

HONORS THESES SUPERVISED

- 2024-2025 Hannah Lubowitz (Psychology & Education, UMich); *High Honors*
- 2024-2025 Natalie Pierce (Psychology & Criminal Justice, UMich); *High Honors*
- 2024-2025 Megan Pham (Psychology, UMich); *Received Best Thesis Award*
- 2023-2024 Sofia Micale (Psychology & Cognitive Science, UMich); *Highest Honors*

PROFESSIONAL SERVICE

JOURNAL AD-HOC REVIEWING

British Journal of Social Psychology, Cognition and Emotion, Journal of Personality, Nature Human Behaviour, Personality & Individual Differences, Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin, Perspectives on Psychological Science, Social Psychological & Personality Science, Scientific Reports

AFFILIATIONS

- Association for Psychological Science (APS)
- International Society for the Science of Existential Psychology (ISSEP)
- Society for Affective Science (SAS)
- Society for Personality and Social Psychology (SPSP)

CONFERENCE POSTER REVIEWING

Society for Personality and Social Psychology (SPSP), 2024 Annual Convention

Association for Psychological Science (APS), 2022 Annual Convention

DEPARTMENTAL SERVICE

UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

2024- Departmental Associate, Department of Psychology
Represent social area graduate students at faculty meetings; voting rights at faculty meetings; meet with department leaders to discuss graduate program issues

2023- Integrity Hearing Board, Rackham Graduate School
Attend academic misconduct hearings, evaluate cases, and recommend sanctions as part of a Board composed of one graduate student and two faculty members

2023-24 Graduate Admissions Committee, Social Psychology Area
Reviewed and evaluated Ph.D. program applications; interviewed applicants

2023-24 Culture Committee, Social Psychology Area
Organized community-building and professional development events

2022-23 Recruitment Weekend Committee, Social Psychology Area
Helped plan and organize recruitment weekend for prospective Ph.D. students

HARVARD UNIVERSITY

2023- Alumna Interviewer (Detroit & New York City)
Conduct interviews with 8 undergraduate applicants to Harvard each year and submit detailed evaluations to the Harvard Admissions Office

2019-20 Committee on Undergraduate Instruction, Department of Psychology
Selected to represent undergraduate students in monthly meetings with faculty members to discuss changes to the undergraduate psychology curriculum

2019-20 Undergraduate Planning Committee, Department of Psychology
Organized and led information sessions for prospective psychology majors

OTHER TEACHING AND CLINICAL EXPERIENCE

2021-22 Peer Support Leader, Mood Lifters, Ann Arbor MI
Co-led a 15-week evidence-based, peer-support mental health program for graduate students

2020-21 Clinical Interviewer, Life is Precious Youth Organization, New York NY
Conducted clinical interviews with Latina adolescents experiencing suicidal ideation

2019-20 Clinical Intern, Center for Psychiatric Rehabilitation, Boston University, Boston MA
Facilitated skills development workshops for adults with developmental disabilities

2017-20 Debate Chair, Harvard Model Congress, Boston, San Francisco, Hong Kong, Singapore, Tokyo
Taught high school students parliamentary procedures and guided them through government simulation debates; taught over 400 students across 7 national and international conferences

2017-19 Science Teacher and Mentor, Harvard Education Portal, Allston MA
Designed and taught after-school science curricula for middle school students

2017, 2018 Instructor, Harvard Summit for Young Leaders in China, Beijing ('17) & Shanghai ('18)
Created and taught two week-long seminars for 100+ high school students in China. Topics were Designing the Modern Skyscraper ('17) and The Morality of Artificial Intelligence ('18)

REFERENCES

ETHAN KROSS, PH.D.

Professor of Psychology

Professor of Management & Organizations

University of Michigan

ekross@umich.edu

RICHARD J. McNALLY, PH.D.

Professor of Psychology

Harvard University

rjm@wjh.harvard.edu

AMIE M. GORDON, PH.D.

Associate Professor of Psychology

University of Michigan

amiemg@umich.edu

SHINOBU KITAYAMA, PH.D.

Robert B. Zajonc Collegiate Professor of Psychology

University of Michigan

kitayama@umich.edu