

John Thomas West, Ph.D.

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[Open Science Framework](#)

[Google Scholar](#)
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[ResearchGate](#)
[ORCID](#) 

Interests: Memory, Emotion, Cognitive Aging, Eyewitness Memory, Open Science

ACADEMIC AND RESEARCH EMPLOYMENT

Visiting Assistant Professor of Psychology
Gettysburg College

Fall 2026 – Present

Postdoctoral Fellow
The Pennsylvania State University
The Center for Healthy Aging, Department of Psychology

Cognitive Aging and Neuroimaging Lab, Director: Dr. Nancy A. Dennis 2023 – 2026

Postdoctoral Funding: T32 AG049676 (2023 – 2025), R01 AG086317-01 (2025 – 2026)

Graduate Researcher, UNC Memory Laboratory, the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, Director: Dr. Neil W. Mulligan 2017 – 2023

Legal Research Consultant

Content Area: Eyewitness memory for commercial products (civil litigation) 2019 – 2023, 2026

EDUCATION

PhD in Cognitive Psychology with a Formal Concentration in Quantitative Psychology

University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill 2020 – 2023

Dissertation Advisor: Dr. Neil W. Mulligan

Dissertation Title: Are emotionally granular individuals emotion experts? Evidence from an experiment of true and false emotional memory

M.A., Cognitive Psychology

University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill 2017 – 2020

B.S., Psychology, magna cum laude with honors in major

George Mason University 2012 – 2016

RESEARCH

Manuscripts In Preparation

West, J. T., Mulligan, N. W., Lindquist, K. A. (in preparation). *Are emotionally granular individuals emotion experts? Evidence from an experiment of true and false emotional memory.*

Manuscripts Under Review

West, J. T., Wagner, R. L., Broderick, M. L., Seo, M. S., Dennis, N. A. (under review). *Comparing different frontal processes as predictors of older individuals' false memory in a "cage match" between neuropsychological assessments, cortical thickness, neural activation, and representational distinctiveness.*
https://doi.org/10.31234/osf.io/7s2gb_v1

Published Articles

West, J. T., Luchini, S. A., Beaty, R. E., Dennis, N. A. (2026). Are creative people more susceptible to false memory? Evidence for age- and task-related differences. *Creativity Research Journal*. <https://doi.org/10.1080/10400419.2026.2703186>

West, J. T., Mulligan, N. W., Lindquist, K. A. (2026). Putting emotional memories in context: Psychological constructionism as a novel paradigm for emotional memory research. *Perspectives on Psychological Science*, 21. <https://doi.org/10.1177/17456916261425152>

***West, J. T.,** *Dubec, L., Wagner, R. L., & Dennis, N. A. (2026). Exploring the neural underpinnings of semantic and perceptual false memories. *Neuropsychologia*, 221, 109332. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.neuropsychologia.2025.109332>
*denotes co-first authorship.

West, J. T., Mulligan, N. W., Bornstein, B. H. (2025). Four (and a half) preregistered failures to replicate the weapon focus effect in online samples. *Psychology, Public Policy, and Law*, 32, 48-64. <https://doi.org/10.1037/law0000469>

West, J. T., Wagner, R. L., Steinkrauss, A., & Dennis, N. A. (2025). Investigating the cognitive correlates of semantic and perceptual false memory in older and younger adults: A multi-group latent variable approach. *Journal of Memory and Language*, 142, 104625. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jml.2025.104625>

Dennis, N., Overman, A., Carpenter, C., Becker, A., **West, J. T.,** & Chase, S. (2025). The Otter and the cleaver: Exploring the neural underpinnings of unitization using the Gestalt principle of proximity. *Journal of Cognitive Neuroscience*, 37, 2409-2429. <https://doi.org/10.1162/jocn.a.78>

- Turney, I. C., Steinkrauss, A. C., Wagner, R. L., Chamberlain, J. D., **West, J. T.**, Hakun, J. G., Ross, L. A., Kirchhoff, B. A., & Dennis, N. A. (2025). Neural effects of memory training to reduce false memories in older adults: Univariate and multivariate analyses. *Neurobiology of Aging*, 147, 187-202. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.neurobiolaging.2024.12.007>
- West, J. T.**, Kuhns, J. M., Touron, D. R., & Mulligan, N. W. (2024). Increased metamemory accuracy with practice does not require practice with metamemory. *Quarterly Journal of Experimental Psychology*, 78, 1280-1302. <https://doi.org/10.1177/17470218241269322>
- Mulligan, N. W., Spataro, P., & **West, J. T.** (2023). Memory and attention: A double dissociation between memory encoding and memory retrieval. *Cognition*, 238, 105509. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.cognition.2023.105509>
- Mulligan, N. W., Buchin, Z. L., & **West, J. T.** (2022). Attention, the testing effect, and retrieval-induced forgetting: Distraction dissociates the positive and negative effects of retrieval on subsequent memory. *Journal of Experimental Psychology: Learning, Memory, and Cognition*, 48, 1905-1922. <https://doi.org/10.1037/xlm0001097>
- West, J. T.**, & Mulligan, N. W. (2021). Investigating the replicability and boundary conditions of the mnemonic advantage for disgust. *Cognition and Emotion*, 35, 753-773. <https://doi.org/10.1080/02699931.2020.1863187>
- Mulligan, N. W., Buchin, Z. L., & **West, J. T.** (2020). Assessing why the testing effect is moderated by experimental design. *Journal of Experimental Psychology: Learning, Memory, and Cognition*, 46, 1293-1308. <https://doi.org/10.1037/xlm0000787>
- West, J. T.**, & Mulligan, N. W. (2019). Prospective metamemory, like retrospective metamemory, exhibits underconfidence with practice. *Journal of Experimental Psychology: Learning, Memory, and Cognition*, 45, 2224-2238. <https://doi.org/10.1037/xlm0000708>

Book Chapters

- Goodman, F.R., Larrazábal, M. A., **West, J. T.**, Kashdan, T. B. (2019). Experiential avoidance across anxiety disorders. In B. O. Olatunji (Ed.), *Cambridge handbook of anxiety and related disorders* (pp. 255-281). Cambridge University Press.
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Conference Talks

Mulligan, N. W., Spataro, P., **West, J. T.** (2023). *Memory and attention: A double-dissociation between memory encoding and memory retrieval*. Talk given at the 64th Psychonomic Society Annual Meeting.

Mulligan, N. W., Buchin, Z. L., **West, J. T.** (2022). *The testing effect with free recall: Organization, attention, and order effects*. Talk given at the 63rd Psychonomic Society Annual Meeting.

Mulligan, N. W., Buchin, Z. L., **West, J. T.** (2021). *Attention, the testing effect, and retrieval-induced forgetting: Distraction dissociates the positive and negative effects of retrieval on subsequent memory*. Talk given at the 62nd Psychonomic Society Annual Meeting.

HONORS/AWARDS

- Judge's Award for Best Poster in Social Sciences and Humanities, 17th Annual Postdoctoral Research Symposium, PSU 2024
- National Science Foundation SBE Postdoctoral Research Fellowship US \$160,000 [awarded, declined to accept postdoc at PSU] 2023
- Graduate Student Opportunity Fund, UNC, Chapel Hill Graduate School US \$3,000 2022
- Baughman Dissertation Research Award, UNC Chapel Hill US \$6,000 2022
- Summer Research Fellowship UNC, Chapel Hill Graduate School US \$5,000 2022

GRANTSMANSHIP

- Served on a merit review panel for grants submitted to the US Veterans Health Administration, Behavioral Health and Social Reintegration portfolio 2026
- Completed an NIH grant writing bootcamp as an NIH T32 fellow at PSU, culminating in the submission of a K99/R00 Pathway to Independence grant to the National Institute on Aging (NIA) related to cognitive and emotional aging
Grant coauthors: Dr. Nancy A. Dennis, Dr. David M. Almeida 2024
- Submitted and awarded NSF SBE Postdoctoral Research Fellowship grant
Grant coauthor: Dr. Kristen A. Lindquist 2023
- Submitted NIA F32 Ruth L. Kirschstein National Research Service Award grant
Grant coauthor: Dr. Kristen A. Lindquist 2022

TEACHING EXPERIENCE

Gettysburg College (Visiting Assistant Professor of Psychology)

- **Instructor, *Introduction to Psychology*** (30 students) Fall 2026
- **Instructor, *Forensic Psychology*** (2 sections, 15 students each) Fall 2026
- **Instructor, *Research Methods*** Spring 2027 (upcoming)
- **Instructor, *Adult Development and Aging*** Spring 2027 (upcoming)

The Pennsylvania State University (Postdoctoral Fellow)

- **Instructor, *Introductory Psychology*** (275 students) Fall 2025
 - **Instructor, *Research Methods in Psychology*** (20 students) Fall 2025, Spring 2026
- Format:* Remote, asynchronous

The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill (Graduate Student)

- **Instructional Assistant, *Research Methods in Psychology***
Instructor: Dr. Patrick Harrison Fall 2020 – Fall 2022
- **Teaching Assistant, *Statistical Principles in Psychological Research***
Instructors: Drs. Patrick Harrison, Elizabeth Jordan, Viji Sathy Fall 2018 – Spring 2020
- **Instructional Assistant, *Introduction to Cognitive Psychology***
Instructors: Drs. Vicki Chanon, Joseph Hopfinger Fall 2017 – Spring 2018

TEACHING-RELATED PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

- Attended Summer Pedagogy Institute at Gettysburg College Summer, 2026
 - Completed Teaching Workshop Series for Postdocs at PSU Spring, 2026
 - Obtained “High Pass” grade in UNC graduate course: College Teaching Spring, 2020
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UNDERGRADUATE RESEARCH MENTORING

- **Undergraduate Research Project Mentor:** Kira Smith (PSU)
Poster Title: Investigating gender-based differences on the impact of the weapons focus effect 2024 – 2025
 - **Undergraduate Research Project Mentor:** Desirée J. Mecca (PSU)
Poster Title: Analyzing the impact of well-being on false memories in adults 2023 – 2024
 - **Undergraduate Honor’s Thesis Committee:** E. Brandon Kelly (UNC)
Thesis Title: Belief is the primary mediator of the font size effect on judgements of learning 2018 – 2019
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AD HOC PEER REVIEW

Acta Psychologica • Aging, Neuropsychology, and Cognition • Applied Cognitive Psychology • Consciousness and Cognition • Cognition and Emotion • Emotion • Individual Differences in Cognition • International Journal of Psychophysiology • Journal of Cognitive Neuroscience • Journal of Gerontology: Psychological Sciences • Journal of Memory and Language • Memory • Psychology and Aging • PNAS • Scientific Reports •

Manuscripts reviewed (not including revisions): 20

PROFESSIONAL MEMBERSHIPS

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|---|----------------|
| • Psychonomic Society | 2018 – Present |
| • Gerontological Society of America | 2024 – 2026 |
| • Cognitive Neuroscience Society | 2024 – 2025 |
| • Association for Psychological Science | 2024 – 2025 |
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QUANTITATIVE AND TECHNICAL TRAINING

- Published peer reviewed research using advanced analyses including
 - Multiple-groups structural equation modeling and factor analysis (West, Luchini, et al., 2026; West, Wagner, et al., 2025)
 - Generalized linear mixed modeling (Turney et al., 2025)
 - Bayesian analysis (West, Luchini, et al., 2026; West, Wagner, et al., 2025; West, Mulligan, et al., 2025; West et al., 2024)
 - Single paper meta-analysis (West, Mulligan, et al., 2025; West et al., 2024; Mulligan et al., 2023; West & Mulligan, 2021)
 - Multivoxel pattern analysis of fMRI data (West, Wagner, et al., under review; West, Dubec, et al., 2026; Dennis et al., 2025; Turney et al., 2025)
 - Fluent in R programming, with additional training in SPSS, JASP, MPlus, and SAS
 - Received a *Formal Concentration in Quantitative Psychology* during my graduate training by completing upper-level graduate courses on structural equation modeling, multilevel modeling, latent growth curve modeling, and machine learning
 - Engaged in fMRI preprocessing and data analysis using programs/pipelines such as fmriprep, fsleyes, SPM, MATLAB, and CoSMoMVA
 - Attended online courses related to topics such as fMRI data acquisition and analysis, meta-analysis, experience-sampling, dynamic structural equation modeling, sample size justification, creating reproducible research reports with Quarto, and R programming
 - Developed expertise in conducting systematic reviews and meta-analyses using the software programs EndNote, Covidence, and the *metafor* R package
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COMMITMENT TO OPEN SCIENCE

- Served on the program committee of the 2025 Penn State Open Scholarship Bootcamp, and hosted an interactive workshop on using the software Quarto to generate reproducible research reports:

West, J. T., Gilmore, R. O. (2025) *Quarto (part II): Reproducible research reports*. Workshop given at the 2025 Penn State Open Scholarship Bootcamp.

<https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.16966756>

- Maintained an active open science presence since 2018 through the [Open Science Framework](#) web interface, where I have shared my research data, materials, analysis code, reproducible research reports, and preregistrations
 - Mentored undergraduate students in open science practices and values both as a course instructor and while supervising undergraduate research projects and theses
 - Conducted research addressing issues of replicability (West, Mulligan, et al., 2025; West & Mulligan, 2021) and constraints on generality (West, Luchini, et al., 2026; West, Wagner, et al., under review) for psychological effects within my substantive areas of interest
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COURSE HISTORY

YEAR	COURSE TITLE	GRADE
<u>University Of North Carolina at Chapel Hill – Graduate Courses</u>		
2017	Cognitive Aging	H
2017	Cognitive Psychology Research Seminar I	H
2017	Statistical Methods in Psychology (ANOVA)	H
2018	Psycholinguistics	H
2018	Cognitive Psychology Research Seminar II	H
2018	Statistical Methods in Psychology (Regression)	P
2018	Cognitive Psychology Research Seminar III	H
2018	Test Theory and Analysis	H
2018	Structural Equation Modeling	H
2019	Human Memory	H
2019	Cognitive Psychology Research Seminar IV	H
2019	Longitudinal Structural Equation Modeling	H
2019	Attention	H
2019	Multilevel Modeling	H
2020	Seminar in Cognitive Psychology	H
2020	Machine Learning	H
2020	College Teaching	H
2020	Psychology of Emotions	H
2022	Advanced Research Methods in Meta-Analysis	H
<u>The Pennsylvania State University – Courses Audited as a Postdoctoral Fellow</u>		
2023	Specialization in Cognitive and Affective Neuroscience Methods	-
2024	The Biology of Aging	-
2025	Well-Being during the Middle Adult Years	-
<u>UNC's Odum Institute for Research in Social Science</u>		
2022	An Introduction to Daily Life Methods: Daily Diary and Experience-Sampling Methods	-
2022	I Spot a Cool Plot: A Nearly Syntax-Free Introduction to Advanced Data Visualization in R for Survey Researchers and Social Scientists	-
<u>Online Courses</u>		
2023	fMRI Image Acquisition and Analyses Course with SPM and ICA	-
2024	Reproducible Reports with Quarto and R Markdown: A Short Course	-
2025	Meta-Analysis (David Wilson)	-
2025	Dynamic Structural Equation Modeling	-
2025	Sample Size Justification	-

UNC-CH, graduate courses are graded H (High Pass) or P (Pass). High Pass is 93% or better and Pass is 80-93.