

***CURRICULUM VITAE*****Jacob S. Sawyer, Ph.D.**

sawyejac@gvsu.edu

**Current Position**

8/2025	<b>Grand Valley State University</b> Assistant Professor of Psychology (Tenure-Track)	Allendale, MI
--------	--	---------------

**Previous Academic Positions**

2022-2025	<b>Alma College</b> Assistant Professor of Psychology (Tenure-Track)	Alma, MI
2018-2022	<b>Pennsylvania State University, Mont Alto Campus</b> Assistant Professor of Psychology (Tenure-Track)	Mont Alto, PA

**Education**

2017	<b>Columbia University</b> <b>Ph.D.</b> , Counseling Psychology (APA-accredited) <i>Dissertation</i> : "Grieving without God: Comparing posttraumatic growth, complicated grief, and psychological distress in believers and atheists during bereavement" <i>Committee</i> : Melanie E. Brewster, Ph.D. (chair), George Bonanno, Ph.D., Bryan Keller, Ph.D., Patricia Kitcher, Ph.D.	New York, NY
2015	<b>Columbia University</b> <b>M. Phil.</b> , Counseling Psychology	New York, NY
2008	<b>Central Michigan University</b> <b>B.S.</b> , Psychology	Mt. Pleasant, MI

**Peer Reviewed Manuscripts**

\*Underlined denotes student collaborator.

**Sawyer, J. S.** (2024). Grief and bereavement beliefs and their associations with death anxiety and complicated grief in a sample of U. S. college students. *Death Studies*. Advance online publication. <https://doi.org/10.1080/07481187.2024.2349933>

**Sawyer, J. S. & Moore, A. N.** (2022). Coping methods and college adjustment in a sample of U. S. undergraduate students during the COVID-19 pandemic. *Journal of American College Health*. 72(8), 2348-2351. <https://doi.org/10.1080/07448481.2022.2129976>

**Sawyer, J. S., Wilner, L. L., & Ertl, M. M.** (2022). Grief and bereavement beliefs among U. S. mental health professionals and the general public. *Death Studies*, 46(10), 2346-2353. <https://doi.org/10.1080/07481187.2021.1944399>

Brewster, M. E., Velez, B., **Sawyer, J. S.**, Motulsky, W., Chan, A., & Kim, V. (2021). Family religiosity, support, and psychological well-being for sexual minority atheist individuals. *Psychology of Religion and Spirituality*, 13(3), 266-275. <https://doi.org/10.1037/rel0000356>

Ertl, M. M., **Sawyer, J. S.**, Martin, J. L., & Brenner, R. E. (2021). The role of objectification in college women's substance misuse and sexual risk. *Journal of Prevention and Health Promotion*, 3(1), 68-96. <https://doi.org/10.1177/26320770211054359>

**Sawyer, J. S.**, Brewster, M. E., & Ertl, M. M. (2021). Death anxiety and death acceptance in atheists and other nonbelievers. *Death Studies*, 45(6), 459-468. <https://doi.org/10.1080/07481187.2019.1648339>

**Sawyer, J. S.** (2020). Bereavement outcomes for atheist individuals: The role of spirituality, discrimination, and meaning. *Omega - Journal of Death and Dying*, 86(2), 395-412. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0030222820974536>

Martin, J. L., Cimini, M. D., Longo, L. M., **Sawyer, J. S.**, & Ertl, M. M. (2020). Equipping mental health professionals to meet the needs of substance-using clients: Evaluation of an SBIRT training program. *Training and Education in Professional Psychology*, 14(1), 42-51. <https://doi.org/10.1037/tep0000258>

Brewster, M. E., Velez, B. L., Geiger, E. F., & **Sawyer, J. S.** (2020). It's like herding cats: Atheist minority stress, group involvement, and psychological outcomes. *Journal of Counseling Psychology*, 67(1), 1-13. <https://doi.org/10.1037/cou0000392>

**Sawyer, J. S.**, & Brewster, M. E. (2019). Assessing posttraumatic growth, complicated grief, and psychological distress in bereaved atheists and believers. *Death Studies*, 43(4), 224-234. <https://doi.org/10.1080/07481187.2018.1446061>

Brewster, M. E., Soderstrom, B., Esposito, J., Breslow, A., **Sawyer, J. S.**, Geiger, E., Morshedian, N., Arango, S., Caso, T., Foster, A., Sandil, R., & Cheng, J. (2017). A content analysis of scholarship on consensual nonmonogamies: Methodological roadmaps, current themes, and directions for future research. *Couple and Family Psychology: Research and Practice*, 6(1), 32-47. <https://doi.org/10.1037/cfp0000074>

Brewster, M. E., Hammer, J., **Sawyer, J. S.**, Eklund, A., & Palamar, J. (2016). Perceived experiences of atheist discrimination: Instrument development and evaluation. *Journal of Counseling Psychology*, 63(5), 557-570. <https://doi.org/10.1037/cou0000156>

### **Book Chapters**

**Sawyer, J. S.** (accepted, pre-publication). Counseling nonreligious clients experiencing grief. In D. M. Abbott (Ed.), *Culturally Responsive Mental Health Practices with Secular Clients*. Rowman & Littlefield.

**Sawyer, J. S.** (2023). How atheists cope with mortality. In T. Taira (Ed.) *Atheism in Five Minutes*. Equinox Publishing.

**Sawyer, J. S.** & Wilner, L. L. (2019). Updated Range L. M. (2000). "Death Anxiety," in P. Roberts (Ed.), *Aging, Vols 1-2*. Salem Press: Pasadena, CA, in P. Moglia (Ed), *Aging Second Edition, Vols 1-2*, Salem Press (print): Ipswich, MA, Grey House Publishing (online), Amenia, NY.

Dubovi, A. & **Sawyer, J. S.** (2018). Evidence-based Peer Health Education: New Paradigms and Opportunities. In M. D. Cimini, & E. Rivero (Eds.), *Promoting Behavioral Health and Reducing Risks among College Students: A Comprehensive Approach*. Abingdon: Routledge.

Wilner, L. L. & **Sawyer, J. S.** (2018). LGBTQ health. In B. C. Auday (Ed.), *Magill's Medical Guide* (8<sup>th</sup> ed.). Ipswich, MA: Salem Press.

**Sawyer, J. S.**, Wilner, L. L., & Brewster, M. E. (2017). Ethics in gender research. In K. Nadal, (Ed.), *The SAGE Encyclopedia of Psychology and Gender*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

**Sawyer, J. S.**, Breslow, A. S., & Brewster, M. E. (2017). Gender socialization in men. In K. Nadal (Ed.), *The SAGE Encyclopedia of Psychology and Gender*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Brewster, M. E., & **Sawyer, J. S.** (2014). Atheism and the American family. In L. Ganong, M. Coleman, & G. J. Geoffrey (Eds.), *The Social History of the American Family*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

### **Presentations**

\*Underlined denotes student collaborator.

Servaty-Seib, H. L., Bordere, T., **Sawyer, J. S.**, Cobb, J., & Douglas, R. (2025, April). *Micro and macro support for grieving college students post-COVID*. Panel discussion presented at the annual Association for Death Education and Counseling Conference, Albuquerque, NM.

**Sawyer, J. S.** (2024, April). *Grief and bereavement beliefs and their associations with death anxiety and complicated grief in a U.S. college student sample*. Research talk presented at the annual Association for Death Education and Counseling Conference, Houston, TX.

Cooney, S. M., **Sawyer, J. S.**, Wallace, B. M., Ludden, A. E., & Flores, B. F. (2024, April). *What do college students think of psychedelics? Examining attitudes, usage, and associations with death anxiety*. Poster presented at the annual Association for Death Education and Counseling Conference, Houston, TX.

Flores, B. F., Wallace, B. M., Kingsley, A. J., Ludden, A. E., & **Sawyer, J. S.** (2023, May). *Coping and bereavement outcomes in a U.S. student sample*. Poster presented at the annual Association for Death Education and Counseling Conference, Columbus, OH.

**Sawyer, J. S.**, & Ertl, M. M. (2021, August). Assessing Correlates and Moderators of Alcohol Use and Drug Misuse in Atheist and Christian Samples. In **J. S. Sawyer (chair)**, *Marginalization and substance use: Examining risk factors and coping methods*. Symposium conducted at the annual convention of the American Psychological Association, Virtual.

Moore, A. N., & **Sawyer, J. S.** (2021, August). *Coping flexibility and college adjustment in bereaved and non-bereaved students during the COVID-19 Pandemic*. Poster presented at the annual convention of the American Psychological Association, Virtual.

**Sawyer, J. S.** (2021, April). *Psychological outcomes for atheist individuals during bereavement: The role of meaning, spirituality, and discrimination*. Paper talk presented at the Annual Conference of the Association for Death Education and Counseling, Virtual.

**Sawyer, J. S.**, Ertl, M. M., & Wilner, L. L. (2020, August). *Assessing misconceptions in beliefs about death, dying, and bereavement*. Poster presented at the annual convention of the American Psychological Association, Washington, D.C.

- Sawyer, J. S.** (2020, May). *Psychological outcomes for atheist individuals during bereavement: The role of meaning, spirituality, and discrimination*. Paper talk accepted to the Annual Conference of the Association for Death Education and Counseling, Columbus, OH. (Conference cancelled).
- Sawyer, J. S., & Ertl, M. M.** (2020, February). *Neither religious nor spiritual: Implications for death, dying, and bereavement*. Roundtable conducted at the 37<sup>th</sup> annual Winter Roundtable Conference at Teachers College, Columbia University, New York, NY.
- Moore, A. N., Hovis, R. M., Burgan, C. N., & Sawyer, J. S.,** (2020, February). *The impact of adverse childhood experiences and social support on drinking behavior and psychological distress in college students*. Roundtable presented at the 37<sup>th</sup> annual Winter Roundtable Conference at Teachers College, Columbia University, New York, NY.
- Sawyer, J. S., Brewster, M. E., & Ertl, M. M.** (2019, August). Atheist Research in Psychology: Current Trends and Future Directions. In **J. S. Sawyer (chair)**, *Death anxiety and death acceptance in nonbelievers*. Symposium conducted at the annual convention of the American Psychological Association, Chicago, IL.
- Brewster, M. E., Sawyer, J. S., & Ertl, M. M.** (2019, August). Atheist Research in Psychology: Current Trends and Future Directions. In **J. S. Sawyer (chair)**, *Forever bowling alone: Community, life satisfaction, and self-esteem for atheist people*. Symposium conducted at the annual convention of the American Psychological Association, Chicago, IL.
- Longo, L. M., Ertl, M. M., Sawyer, J. S., & Martin, J. L.** (2019, August). *SBIRT knowledge, stigma, and self-efficacy among mental health professionals*. Poster to be presentation at the annual convention of the American Psychological Association, Chicago, IL.
- Boyle, M. A., Ertl, M. M., Sawyer, J. S., Longo, L. M., Pazienza, R., & Martin, J. L.** (2019, August). *Psychosocial risk factors associated with alcohol and drug use among college student women*. Poster presentation at the annual convention of the American Psychological Association, Chicago, IL.
- Ertl, M. M., Sawyer, J. S., Sokolowski, K., Longo, L. M., Cimini, M. D., & Rivero, E.** (2018, March). *Racial and sex differences in college student engagement in health risk behaviors*. Poster presentation at the Collaborative Perspectives on Addiction Annual Meeting, Tampa, FL.
- Longo, L. M., Martin, J. L., Cimini, M. D., & Sawyer, J. S.** (2018, March). *Training of psychology graduate students in SBIRT: Identifying and assessing essential competencies*. Poster presentation at the Collaborative Perspectives on Addiction Annual Meeting, Tampa, FL.
- Spoor, S., Fico, D., Liriano, L., Ojeda, T., Velasquez, K., Dubovi, A., Sawyer, J. S., & Nolan, S.** (2018, February). *Students helping students: Empowering women student leaders through peer education*. Roundtable presentation at the 35<sup>th</sup> annual Winter Roundtable Conference at Teachers College, Columbia University, New York, NY.
- Sawyer, J. S., & Brewster, M. E.** (2017, August). *Grieving without God: Comparing grief responses in believers and atheists*. Poster presentation at the annual convention of the American Psychological Association, Washington, D.C.

- Dubovi, A. S., Slotkin, S., **Sawyer, J. S.**, Sheu, H., Cimini, M. D., Martin, J. L., & Cusick-Brix, M. (2017, August). *Testing the effects of a SCT-based wellness coaching training program in enhancing health-related outcomes among college peer educators*. Poster presentation at the annual convention of the American Psychological Association, Washington, D.C.
- Cimini, M. D., Dubovi, A., & **Sawyer, J. S.** (2017, June). *Engaging peer educators in delivering evidence-based brief motivational interventions: Innovative training models, benefits, and challenges*. Presentation at the 35<sup>th</sup> annual Counseling Centers of New York Conference, Buffalo, NY.
- Sawyer, J. S.**, Dubovi, A., Cimini, M. D., Rivero, E., Sheu, H., Martin, S., Nicastro, S., Ojeda, T., Velasquez, K. (2017, February). *Responding to diversity and social justice needs on college campuses using a peer health education model*. Roundtable conducted at the 34<sup>th</sup> annual Winter Roundtable Conference at Teachers College, Columbia University, New York, NY.
- Beveridge, C., **Sawyer, J. S.**, & Robbins, R. (2017, February). *Multicultural competency training in the red: Strategies for effective training models in conservative U.S. regions*. Roundtable conducted at the 34<sup>th</sup> annual Winter Roundtable Conference at Teachers College, Columbia University, New York, NY.
- Cheng, J., **Sawyer, J. S.**, & Keum, B. (2016, August). *Internalized language attitudes*. Paper session at the annual convention of the American Psychological Association, Denver, CO.
- Sawyer, J. S.**, & Brewster, M. E. (2016, February). *Death and loss for atheists: A discussion on grief without belief in god(s)*. Roundtable conducted at the 33<sup>rd</sup> annual Winter Roundtable Conference at Teachers College, Columbia University, New York, NY.
- Sawyer, J. S.**, Morshedien, N. & Brewster, M. E. (2016, February). *Atheist identity and psychological well-being: Benefits of positive group associations*. Poster presented at the 33<sup>rd</sup> annual Winter Roundtable Conference at Teachers College, Columbia University, New York, NY.
- Brewster, M. E., & **Sawyer, J. S.** (2015, August). *Loneliness and psychological distress: Exploring outcomes of anti-atheist discrimination*. Paper session at the annual convention of the American Psychological Association, Toronto, ON.
- Brewster, M. E., Soderstrom, B., Esposito, J., Breslow, A., Caso, T., Arango, S., Foster, A., Geiger, E., Sandil, R., Morshedien, N., **Sawyer, J. S.**, & Cheng, J. (2015, August). *Understanding "monogamish" relationships: A content analysis of peer-reviewed scholarship*. Poster presented at the annual convention of the American Psychological Association, Toronto, ON.
- Foster, A., Geiger, E., Caso, T., Arango, S., Breslow, A. S., Brewster, M. E., Cheng, J., Esposito, J., Morshedien, N., Sandil, R., **Sawyer, J. S.**, Soderstrom, B. (2015, February). *Self and social justice: The benefits and drawbacks of hashtag activism*. Roundtable conducted at the 32<sup>nd</sup> annual Winter Roundtable Conference at Teachers College, Columbia University, New York, NY.
- Brewster, M. E., **Sawyer, J. S.**, Eklund, A., Hammer, J., Palamar, J., Foster, A., & Lenaburg, S. (2014, August). *Atheists in America: An extension of minority stress theory to nonbelieving populations*. Poster presented at the annual convention of the American Psychological Association, Washington, D.C.

**Sawyer, J. S., Brewster, M. E., & Lau, M.** (2014, February). *An examination of epistemological styles and multicultural counseling*. Poster presented at the 31<sup>st</sup> annual Winter Roundtable Conference at Teachers College, Columbia University, New York, NY.

Brewster, M., Cheng, J., Foster, A., Breslow, A., Esposito, J., Geiger, E., Keum, B., Leanburg, S., Sandil, R., & **Sawyer, J. S.** (2014, February). *The “me-search” in research: Processing insider/outsider identities when conducting studies with marginalized groups*. Roundtable conducted at the 31<sup>st</sup> annual Winter Roundtable Conference at Teachers College, Columbia University, New York, NY.

**Sawyer, J. S., & Sundberg, C.** (2011, June). *Support needs and funding levels*. Poster presented at the national conference of the American Association of Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities, St. Paul, MN.

### **Media and Other Invited Speaking Engagements**

- 2024 *Examining Myths About Grief and Bereavement*. The Academic Minute: WAMC Northeast Public Radio
- 2024 Supporting Individuals Experiencing Grief: An Evidence-Based Approach. Guest speaker at the Child Advocacy Center, Alma, MI.
- 2019 *The Psychology of Death and Loss for Nonbelievers*. Speaker at the 78<sup>th</sup> annual conference of the American Humanist Association at Carnegie Mellon University, Pittsburg, PA.
- 2018 *A Comparison of Atheists and Believers during Bereavement*. The Academic Minute: WAMC Northeast Public Radio.

### **Research Grant Awards and Other Grant Experience**

**Extending minority stress theory to atheists and other nonbelievers: Implications for substance use.**

Role: Principal Investigator

Source: The Pennsylvania State University, Social Science Research Institute (SSRI)

Time Period: May 2020 - May 2021

Total Funding: \$9,166.44

**A Comprehensive, Collaborative, Multi-Component SBIRT Training Model in Professional Psychology**

Role: Project Coordinator

Principal Investigators: Jessica L. Martin, PhD & M. Dolores Cimini, PhD

Source: Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA)

Time Period: August 2017 - August 2018

Total Funding: \$942,927

### **Other Honors and Awards**

- 2024 Faculty Small Grant Award (\$400)
- 2022 Faculty Small Grant Award (\$420)
- 2020 Penn State Mont Alto Faculty Scholar Award (\$500)
- 2019 Faculty & Staff Collaboration Award: Unity Week Contributing Faculty Member
- 2017 New York State/United University Professions Individual Development Grant (\$680)

- 2016 Dissertation Grant-in-aid (\$5,300)
- 2016 Student Scholarship – Poster Session – The 33<sup>rd</sup> Annual Teachers College Winter Roundtable on Cultural Psychology and Education (\$100)
- 2016 Student Scholarship – Poster Session – The 32<sup>nd</sup> Annual Teachers College Winter Roundtable on Cultural Psychology and Education (\$100)
- 2014 Student Scholarship – Poster Session – The 31<sup>st</sup> Annual Teachers College Winter Roundtable on Cultural Psychology and Education (\$100)
- 2014 Induction to Psi Chi – The International Honor Society in Psychology
- 2011 American Association for Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities – Student Scholarship for Outstanding Research (\$600)
- 2010 Induction to the National Honor Society of Phi Kappa Phi

### **Alma College Course History**

#### **Psychology Program**

- PSY 120 - Foundations of Psychology
- PSY 225 - Research Methods
- PSY 280 - Grief and Bereavement
- PSY 314 - Psychopathology
- PSY 315 - Clinical Interviewing
- PSY 386 - Internship
- PSY 399 - Thesis Project
- PSY 421 – Senior Seminar
- PSY 500 - Independent Study

### **Alma College Campus Service**

- 2024 – 2025 Pre-Health Professions Committee (appointed position)
- 2024 – 2025 Academic Organization Task Force (appointed position)
- 2024 – 2025 Self and Society Explore Representative (elected position)
- 2023 – 2025 Institutional Review Board Assistant to the Chair
- 2023 – 2025 Institutional Review Board Member
- 2023 – 2024 Honors Day Committee

### **Penn State Mont Alto Course History**

#### **Psychology Program**

- PSYCH 100 - Introduction to Psychology
- PSYCH 221 - Introduction to Social Psychology
- PSYCH 270 - Introduction to Abnormal Psychology
- PSYCH 432 - Multicultural Psychology in America
- PSYCH 441 - Health Psychology
- PSYCH 470 - Abnormal Psychology
- PSYCH 494 - Research Capstone
- PSYCH 496 - Independent Study Capstone

#### **Human Development and Family Studies Program**

- HDFS 411 - The Helping Relationship
- HDFS 414 - Resolving Human Development and Family Problems
- HDFS 448 - Death and Bereavement

**Penn State Mont Alto Campus Service**

2021 – 2022	Diversity Committee
2020 – 2022	Secretary for the Faculty Senate Executive Committee
2019 – 2022	Faculty Senate Executive Committee (3-year term)
2019 – 2022	HDFS/Psychology Club Faculty Advisor
2019 – 2021	Faculty Affairs Committee
2019 – 2020	Academic Festival Committee

**Professional Service****Ad hoc review for academic journals***American Journal of Orthopsychiatry**BMC Nursing**BMC Psychology**British Journal of Guidance and Counseling**Death Studies**Journal of American College Health**Journal of Counseling Psychology**Journal of Religion and Health**Mental Health, Religion, and Culture**OMEGA - Journal of Death and Dying**Psychology of Religion and Spirituality**Psychology of Sexual Orientation and Gender Diversity**Psychology of Women Quarterly* (Faculty advisor for doctoral student reviewer)*Secularism and Nonreligion***Proposal review for academic conferences**

2020 Counseling Psychology Conference

APA Division 17 Program Committee

APA Division 45 Program Committee

Great Lakes Conference

**Professional Memberships**

Association for Death Education and Counseling

Society for the Teaching of Psychology (APA Division 2)

Society of Counseling Psychology (APA Division 17)

**Clinical Appointments**

8/2017 – 8/2018	<b>University at Albany, SUNY</b> <b>Counseling and Psychological Services</b> Staff Psychologist and Screening, Brief Intervention, and Referral to Treatment (SBIRT) Grant Project Coordinator	Albany, NY
8/2016 – 8/2017	<b>University at Albany, SUNY</b> <b>Counseling and Psychological Services</b> Doctoral Intern and Peer Wellness Coordinator (APA-accredited)	Albany, NY

8/2014 – 5/2015	<b>Baruch College Counseling Center</b> Clinical Trainee	New York, NY
8/2013 – 5/2014	<b>John Jay College of Criminal Justice Counseling Center</b> Clinical Trainee	New York, NY
8/2011 – 5/2013	<b>Dean Hope Center for Educational and Psychological Services</b> Clinical and Psychological Assessment Trainee	New York, NY