
James “Ross” Spears

Department of Psychology and Counseling
The University of Texas at Tyler
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EDUCATIONAL BACKGROUND

August 2023 **Doctor of Philosophy in Counselor Education and Supervision**
The University of Texas at San Antonio, San Antonio, TX
(CACREP Accredited)

Dissertation: *Development of Student Neurofeedback Learning Competencies: A Delphi Method Study*
(Chair- Derek Robertson, PhD, LPC-S)

August 2020 **Master of Science in Clinical Mental Health Counseling**
The University of Texas at San Antonio, San Antonio, TX,
(CACREP Accredited)

August 2018 **Bachelor of Science in Psychology**
Abilene Christian University, Abilene, TX

LICENSURE

Licensed Professional Counselor, Texas, License #86786, 2023- present

PROFESSIONAL EMPLOYMENT HISTORY

August 2024-
Present **Assistant Professor of Counseling**, Department of Psychology and
Counseling, *University of Texas at Tyler*, Tyler, TX

August 2023-
August 2024 **Assistant Professor of Practice**, *Department of Counseling*,
University of Texas at San Antonio, San Antonio, TX

January 2022-
Present **Counselor and Neurofeedback Practitioner**, *The Well Mind Center*
San Antonio, TX

June 2021-
March 2022 **Neurofeedback Practitioner**, *Waves of Change Performance Institute*,
Neurology Institute of San Antonio, San Antonio, TX

August 2020 -
Present **Graduate Research Assistant**, *The Department of Counseling*,
University of Texas at San Antonio, *College of Education and Human*

Development, San Antonio, TX

November 2018 - **Graduate Assistant, Center for Civic Engagement,**
August 2020 *The University of Texas at San Antonio, San Antonio, TX*

August 2019 - **Neurofeedback Student Counselor, Sarabia Family Counseling Center,**
August 2020 *The University of Texas at San Antonio, San Antonio, TX*

August 2019 - **Practicum Student Counselor, Sarabia Family Counseling Center,**
December 2019 *The University of Texas at San Antonio, San Antonio, TX*

August 2016 - **Assistant Director for Edwards Residence Hall, Student Life,**
May 2018 *Abilene Christian University, Abilene, TX*

Fall 2014 - **Senior Student Services Representative, Wildcat Central,**
May 2018 *Abilene Christian University, Abilene, TX*

AWARDS AND HONORS

2024 Outstanding Dissertation Award, UTSA Graduate School, University of Texas at San Antonio

2023 Jay Gunkelman Scholarly Research Award, International Society of Neuroregulation and Research

2023 First Place Student Content Presentation, International Society of Neuroregulation and Research

2023 Outstanding Doctoral Student, Sigma Alpha Chi Chapter, University of Texas at San Antonio

2022 Genie B. Davis Award, Biofeedback Certification International Alliance

2022 In Memoriam Award, International Society of Neuroregulation and Research

2022 Student Content Presentation Award, International Society of Neuroregulation and Research

2022 Outstanding Practitioner, Sigma Alpha Chi Chapter, University of Texas at San Antonio

2021 Student Poster Award, International Society of Neuroregulation and Research

2021 Travel Diversity Award, Association for Counselor Education and Supervision

2020 Presidential Volunteer Service Award, President's Council on Service and Civic Participation (AmeriCorps and Points of Light),

- 2019 Certificate of Appreciation, The Neurofeedback Society of UTSA, University of Texas at San Antonio
- 2019 Outstanding presentation at Counselors at the Capitol: Professional Advocacy Mini-Conference, Sigma Alpha Chi Chapter, University of Texas at San Antonio
- 2016 Certificate of Recognition for Spanish Texas: Legend and Legacy, Department of Language and Literature, Abilene Christian University
- 2011 Boy Scouts of America (BSA), Rank of Eagle Scout

RESEARCH AND SCHOLARLY ACTIVITIES SUMMARY

Refereed Publications

(*students)

- Spears, J. R.**, Villalobos, N., *Rich, W., Prasath, P. R., & *Ray, W. (*accepted*). Exploring neuromyths in counselor education: A neuro-informed cognitive behavioral therapy approach. *Journal of Teaching and Supervision in Counseling*.
- Spears, J. R.**, Romero, D. E., Robertson, D. L., & Prasath, P. R. (2024). Development of neurofeedback training competencies for counselors: A delphi study. *Counselor Education and Supervision*, 1–15. <https://doi.org/10.1002/ceas.12318>
- Spears, J. R.**, Romero, D. E., McVay, K. E., & Surratt, E. (2024). Trauma-informed neurofeedback for law enforcement occupational and organizational stress. *NeuroRegulation*, 11(1), 81-91. <https://doi.org/10.15540/nr.11.1.81>
- Spears, J. R.**, Duffey, M. E., & Prasath, P. R. (2024). Examining counselor-in-training self-efficacy through a “choose-your-own-adventure” classroom activity. *Journal of Creativity in Mental Health*. <https://doi.org/10.1080/15401383.2024.2303495>
- Prasath, P. R., Kumaran, A. C. P., **Spears, J. R.**, & Jackson, K. (2021). Creativity in the classroom: A content analysis of the journal of creativity in mental health from 2005 to 2020. *Journal of Creativity in Mental Health*, 1-22. <https://doi.org/10.1080/15401383.2021.1983493>
- Romero, D. E., Anderson, A., Gregory, J. C., Potts, C. A., Jackson, A., **Spears, J. R.**, Jones, M. S., & Speedlin, S. (2020). Using neurofeedback to lower PTSD symptoms. *NeuroRegulation*, 7(3), 99-106. <https://doi.org/10.15540/nr.7.3.99>

Refereed Publications Under Review

- Rich, W., Romero, D. E., **Spears, J. R.**, Jones, M. S., & Cummins, G. (*under review*). Examining collected qEEGs of SWAT team operators: A pilot study. Submitted to the *Journal of Police and Criminal Psychology*.

Interiano-Shiverdecker, C. G., Robertson, D. **Spears, J. R.**, & Rich, W. Z. (*under review*). Unveiling cultural humility growth in trainee counselors: Insights from an international study abroad journey. [Manuscript submitted to the *International Journal for the Advancement of Counselling*]. Department of Counseling. University of Texas at San Antonio.

Manuscripts in Progress

Spears, J. R., Robertson, D., & Leal, J. (*data analysis phase*). Implicit bias among counselors-in-training: Using journal reflections as a creative teaching strategy to identify LGBT-specific bias. To be submitted to the *Journal of Counseling & Development* (JCD).

Spears, J. R., Prasath, P. R., & Rich, W. (*data collection phase*). A content analysis of first responder literature within professional counseling. To be submitted to the *Journal of Counseling and Development* (JCD).

Prasath, P. R., **Spears, J. R.** (*data collection phase*). A content analysis of artificial intelligence literature within professional counseling. To be submitted to the *Journal of Counseling and Development* (JCD).

Scholarly Presentations

(*students)

International – Refereed Contributions

Spears, J. R. & *Rich, W. (2024). *Shaping professional identity: Perspectives and recommendations from mental health clinicians utilizing neurofeedback*. [Educational content presentation] International Society for Neuroregulation and Research, Chicago, Illinois.

Spears, J.R., *Rich, W., & *Cummins, G. (2023). *Special weapons and tactics: Examining collected qEEGs for the assessment and mental health implications of SWAT personnel*. [Educational content presentation] International Society for Neuroregulation and Research, Dallas, Texas.

Spears, J.R. (2023, August). Development of Student Neurofeedback Learning Competencies. [Poster presentation] International Society for Neuroregulation and Research, Dallas, Texas.

Spears, J.R., & Rich, W. (2022, July 28). *Freeze! you're under too much stress: Utilizing neurofeedback for the mitigation of law enforcement stressors*. [Educational content presentation] International Society for Neuroregulation and Research, Orlando, Florida.

Spears, J.R., & Edmonds, C. (2021, June 26). *Navigating virtual neurofeedback treatment during COVID-19: A retrospective analysis*. [Poster presentation] International Society for Neuroregulation and Research, Virtual.

National – Refereed Contributions

- Ausloos, C., Tapia-Fuselier, J., & **Spears, J. R.** (2024). *Responding with cultural humility and advocacy for LGBTQ+ persons with disabilities*. [Content Presentation] Society for Sexual, Affectional, Intersex, and Gender Expansive Identities (SAIGE) conference, Golden, Colorado.
- Spears, J. R.**, *Rich, W., & *Cummins, G. (2024). *Assistance for all: Ethical considerations for counselors working with law enforcement officers*. [Educational content presentation] Law and Ethics in Counseling Conference, New Orleans, Louisiana.
- Spears, J. R.** (2024). *Ethical considerations for integrating neurofeedback into the counseling profession*. [Roundtable] Law and Ethics in Counseling Conference, New Orleans, Louisiana.
- Spears, J. R.**, & *Rich, W. (October, 2023). *Todos Son Bienvenidos: Enhancing cultural humility and racial identity development among counselors-in-training through a study abroad experience to Oaxaca, Mexico*. [Roundtable] Association of Counselor Education and Supervision (ACES), Denver, Colorado.
- Spears, J. R.** (2022). *“Hi gay!”: Strategies for moving beyond LGBT implicit bias*. [Educational content presentation] Society for Sexual, Affectional, Intersex, and Gender Expansive Identities (SAIGE) conference, Chicago/Northbrook, Illinois.
- Prasath, P. R., Ajitha, C. P., **Spears, J. R.**, Jackson, A. (2022). *Creativity + research = systematic content analysis to explore creative teaching*. [Educational content presentation] American Counseling Association Virtual Conference Experience. Virtual.
- Duffey, T., Hudspeth, E. F., Cruz, T., Duffey, M., Lillis, M., & **Spears, J. R.** (2022). *Getting creative: Bringing creativity into any practice*. [Educational content presentation] American Counseling Association Conference, Atlanta, Georgia.
- Spears, J. R.**, Cruz, T., & Lillis, M. (2022). *Considerations for doctoral students engaging in supervision of graduate-level counseling students*. [Roundtable] Law and Ethics in Counseling Conference 2022, New Orleans, Louisiana.
- Duffey, M., **Spears, J.R.**, Cruz, T., McVay, K.E., & Lillis, M. (2021). *Zoom university: First year doctoral student development during covid-19 in counseling programs*. [Poster presentation] Association for Counselor Education and Supervision Conference, Atlanta Georgia.
- Prasath, P., Ajitha, C. P., **Spears, J. R.**, & Jackson, K. (2021). *Creativity in the classroom: A systematic content analysis of the journal of creativity in mental health*. [Educational content presentation]. Association for Counselor Education and Supervision Conference, Atlanta, Georgia.
- Lillis, M., Cruz, T., McVay, K., Duffey, M., & **Spears, R.** (2021, March-April). *Virtually connected: The five good things and relational growth during virtual learning*.

[Educational content presentation] American Counseling Association Conference, Virtual.

Regional – Refereed Contributions

Spears, J. R., *Gilmore, E., & *Contreras, A. (2024). *Attending to Neuromyths in Counselor Education: A Neuro-Informed Classroom Lecture*. [25-minute Express Session] Southern Association of Counselor Education and Supervision (SACES), Dallas, Texas.

Spears, J. R., *Duffey, M., & Prasath, P. R. (2024). *Fostering Student Self-Efficacy: Integrating Creativity into the Classroom*. [Roundtable] Southern Association of Counselor Education and Supervision (SACES), Dallas, Texas.

Flangan, C.Y., Lorey, D., Newton, S., **Spears, J.,** & Spooner, V. (2018). *Confidence is key: The relationship between self-esteem and the big five*. [Poster presentation] Southwestern Psychological Association, Houston, TX.

Gallup, S., Banks, E., Lowe, M., Redmayne, K., Ruiz, E., **Spears, R.** (2017, April). *The Role of Parental Involvement in Achievement Motivation Among College Students*. [Educational content presentation] Southwestern Psychological Association, San Antonio Texas.

State – Refereed Contributions

Smedley, D., & **Spears, J. R.** (2024). *Towards mutuality: Relational ethics for family counselors*. [Content Presentation] Texas Counseling Association Professional Development Conference, Dallas, Texas.

Spears, J. R., & *Rich, W. (2024). *Cultivating compassion: A cultural humility approach to counseling LEO professionals*. [Content Presentation] Texas Counseling Association Professional Development Conference, Dallas, Texas.

Spears, J. R., *Rich, W., & *Cummins, G. (2024). *Integrating cultural humility training among counselors working with law enforcement* [Content Presentation]. Texas Association for Counselor Education and Supervision, Georgetown, TX.

Spears, J. R., Interiano-Shiverdecker, C., Robertson, D., & Rich, W. (2024). *Fostering cultural humility for counselors-in-training through a short-term study abroad experience* [Roundtable]. Texas Association for Counselor Education and Supervision, Georgetown, TX.

Spears, J. R., Rich, W., Villalobos, N., Prasath, P. R., & Ray, W. (2023). *Mitigation of neuromyths in counselors-in-training through a neuro-informed classroom lecture*. [Poster presentation] Texas Counseling Association Professional Development Conference, Houston, Texas.

Spears, J. R., Robertson, D., & Leal, A. J. (2023). *'It's just a phase': Understanding and attending to LGBT implicit bias in counselor education*. [Educational content

- presentation]. Texas Association for Counselor Education and Supervision, Georgetown, Texas.
- Spears, J. R.,** Duffey, M., Prasath, P. R., & Daou, C. (2023). *'It depends': Examining student self-efficacy through a 'choose-your-own-adventure' classroom activity*. [Poster Presentation] Texas Association for Counselor Education and Supervision, Georgetown, Texas.
- Rich, W., **Spears, J. R.,** & Robertson, D. (2023). *Study abroad andragogy for facilitating cultural humility and racial identity development in counselors-in-training*. [Educational content presentation] Texas Association for Counselor Education and Supervision, Georgetown, Texas.
- Spears, J. R.,** Duffey, M., & Prasath, P. R. (2022). *Two paths diverged: Using a 'choose-your-own-adventure' activity to increase student self-efficacy*. [Poster presentation] Texas Counseling Association Professional Development Conference, Dallas, Texas.
- Spears, J. R.** & Robertson, D. (2022). *Helping counselors in training recognize and navigate LGBT implicit bias*. [Educational content presentation] Texas Association for Counselor Education and Supervision Conference, Arlington, Texas.
- Spears, J.R.,** McVay, K. E., Duffey, M., & Cruz, T. (2021). *Unintentional virtual learning: First-year doctoral student's experiences through a strength-based lens*. [Poster session] Texas Counseling Association 2021 Conference, Galveston, Texas.
- Ajitha, C.P., Prasath, P., Jackson, K., & **Spears, J.R.** (2021). *Wondering how to be creative in the classroom? Tips for early career faculty from our practice-based creativity research* [Content session] Texas Counseling Association Professional Development Conference, Galveston, Texas.
- Leeth, C., McVay, K., **Spears, J.R.,** Lillis, M., Cruz, T., & Duffey, M. (2021). *Bystander intervention for bullying*. [Educational content presentation] Chicago School of Psychology Annual Conference, Virtual.
- Spears, R.,** Villalobos, N., & Gutierrez, J. (2020). *Latinx and healthy boundaries: how westernized counseling approaches influence client growth*. [Educational content presentation] Texas LPC-Intern Association's first annual conference, Austin, TX.

Local – Refereed Contributions

- Spears, J. R.** (2023). *Responding to law enforcement stressors through neurofeedback*. [Educational content presentation]. UTSA Graduate School 3-Minute Research Competition, San Antonio, TX.
- Spears, J. R.,** & McVay, K. E. (2021). *When the honeymoon ends: Counseling considerations when navigating partner infidelity*. Sigma Alpha Chi Chapter of Chi Sigma Iota Newsletter.

Spears, J.R., & Villalobos, N. (2019). The simplicity of advocacy. Sigma Alpha Chi Chapter of Chi Sigma Iota Newsletter.

Spears, R. (2019). *Counselor Advocacy Experience*. [Poster session] The University of Texas at San Antonio's Counselors at the Capitol: Professional Advocacy Mini-Conference, San Antonio, TX.

Spears, R. (2019). *Van de Kolk's PTSD Protocol* [Poster session] The University of Texas at San Antonio's Neurofeedback Society Mini-Conference: Unlocking the Power of Your Mind's Healing Potential, San Antonio, TX, October 26.

Gallup, S., Banks, E., Lowe, M., Redmayne, K., Ruiz, E., **Spears, R.** (2017). *The Role of Parental Involvement in Achievement Motivation Among College Students*. [Poster presentation] Abilene Christian University Undergraduate Research Festival, Abilene, Texas.

Local - Non-refereed Presentations

Spears, J. R. & Rich, W. (2023). *Chi Sigma Iota (CSI): Pro tips for pitching a counseling proposal*. Virtual workshop presented to clinical mental health and school counseling graduate students at The University of Texas at San Antonio. The University of Texas at San Antonio, San Antonio, TX.

McVay, K., **Spears, J. R.**, Duffey, M. (2020). *Chi Sigma Iota (CSI): Masters portfolio workshop*. Virtual workshop presented to clinical mental health and school counseling graduate students at The University of Texas at San Antonio. The University of Texas at San Antonio, San Antonio, TX.

MEDIA CONTRIBUTIONS AND HIGHLIGHTS

Spears, J. R., & Rich, W. [Guest Speakers]. (2022). Counseling considerations for counselors working with law enforcement personnel. [Audio Podcast episode]. In *NuroFlex*.

GRANTING ACTIVITIES

External

2023 *Graduate Neurofeedback Training and Counselor Identity*. (PI, \$500). Texas Association for Counseling Education and Supervision Research Grant. Funded. [Research]

2023 *Development of Student Neurofeedback Learning Competencies: A Delphi Method Study*. (PI, \$2000). Foundation for Neurofeedback and Neuromodulation (FNMR) Research Mini Grant. Funded. [Research]

- 2022 *Student Neurofeedback Learning Competencies. (PI, \$500).* Texas Counseling Association (TCA) Educational Endowment Fund. Funded. [Research]
- 2021 *Diversity Travel Scholarship.* Association for Counselor Education and Supervision. (\$500). Funded. [Instructional].

Internal

- 2022 *Travel Grant.* UTSA Graduate School Travel Grant, University of Texas at San Antonio. (\$700). Funded. [Research].
- 2022 *Travel Grant.* Department of Education and Human Development, University of Texas at San Antonio. (\$500). Funded. [Instructional]. 2022.
- 2021 *Travel Grant.* UTSA Graduate School Travel Grant, University of Texas at San Antonio. (\$500). Funded. [Research].
- 2020 *Center for Student Success Summit Stipend,* UTSA Center for Student Success, University of Texas at San Antonio. (\$150). Funded. [Instructional].

TEACHING ACTIVITIES

Courses Taught:

University of Texas at Tyler

- COUN 5368 Assessment in Counseling
 COUN 5391 Essentials in Counseling Skills

University of Texas at San Antonio

- COU 5213 Counseling Theories
 COU 5393 Development: Counseling Skills
 COU 5683 Practicum in Counseling

Courses Co-Taught:

University of Texas at San Antonio

- COU 5233 Group Theory and Process
 COU 5243 Diagnosis in Counseling
 COU 5283 Counseling in a Multicultural
 COU 5713 Internship I&II in Clinical Mental Health Counseling
 COU 6153 Career Development and Choice
 COU 6523 Couples and Family Counseling

SERVICES ACTIVITIES

Departmental Service

CACREP Renewal Committee Member (August 2022 – August 2023)
Sigma Alpha Chi chapter of Chi Sigma Iota (2019 – 2023)
 Awards Committee Chair, (2021-2022)
 Awards Committee Co-Chair, (2020-2021)
 Counselor Engagement Summit and Chapter Networking Taskforce, (2019-2020)
The Neurofeedback Society of UTSA, Member 2018 - present
 Past President (2021-2022)
 President, (2020-2021)
 President-Elect, (2020)
 Secretary, (2019-2020)

University Service

UTSA College of Education and Human Development Awards Committee Member (2023-2024)
Center for Civic Engagement (CCE)
 Annual Summit Planning Committee, (2019)
 Speak Up! Speak Out! University Volunteer, (2019)

Professional Service

2024	Society for Sexual, Affectional, Intersex, and Gender Expansive Identities Conference Planning Committee Member
2022	International Society for Neuroregulation and Research Student Conference Volunteer
2023	Texas Association for Counselor Education and Supervision Midwinter Conference Proposal Reviewer
2019	Texas Counseling Association Texas Counseling Association Advocacy Day

Professional Memberships

Active Memberships

American Counseling Association (ACA)
Association for Counselor Education and Supervision (ACES)
International Society for Neuroregulation and Research (ISNR)
Southern Association for Counselor Education and Supervision (SACES)
Society for Sexual, Affectional, Intersex, and Gender Expansive Identities (SAIGE)

Texas Counseling Association (TCA)

Texas Association for Counselor Education and Supervision (TACES)

Texas Society for Sexual, Affectional, Intersex, and Gender Expansive Identities (TxSAIGE)

Professional Trainings

CAREER BUILDER: Mentoring 101. *University of Texas at San Antonio*, San Antonio, TX

CITI Human Research Program Course. *University of Texas at San Antonio*, San Antonio, TX

CITI Social and Behavioral Sciences Responsible Conduct of Research (RCR) Course.

University of Texas at San Antonio, San Antonio, TX

Online Trauma Informed Care (Fall 2019). *Texas Department of Family and Protective Services*, San Antonio, TX

Reporting Suspected Abuse or Neglect of a Child: A Guide for Education Professionals Web-based Training (Fall 2019). *Texas Department of Family and Protective Services*, San Antonio, TX