**SAMANTHA CASTRO TEIXEIRA**

•castroteixs@vcu.edu•

**EDUCATION**

**PhD Health Psychology**

Virginia Commonwealth University *Expected* Aug 2029

**MA Clinical Psychology**

Pontifical Catholic University. - Cumulative GPA [Note: 3.92] Dec, 2024

**Graduate Certificate Studies in Positive Psychology and Mindfulness**

Candido Mendes University - CPAF Dec, 2022

**BS Psychology**

Pontifical Catholic University. - GPA [Note: 3.42] Dec, 2015

**RESEARCH INTEREST**

My research interest center on the interplay between chronic conditions and psychological health, developing and evaluating interventions to improve coping strategies for individuals living with chronic pain. My overall research objective is to advance evidence-based strategies that enhance quality of life for people with chronic conditions, while contributing to academia through research, teaching, and mentorship.

**RESEARCH**

**VCU Pediatric Health and Development Lab,** Richmond, VA Aug 2025 to Present

***Research assistant* –** *Advisor**Dr. Cecelia Valrie*

* Design and manage studies on SCD, pain, and interventions
* Collaborate on research projects focused on SCD, sleep, and pain
* Compile training materials in the areas of implementation science
* Conduct data collection, analysis, and interpretation of data
* Work on the preparation of manuscripts and posters

**Illinois State University –** Chicago,Illinois (Remote) May 2024 – Sept 2024

***Research Volunteer* –** *Advisor**Dr. Chung-Yi Chiu*

* Contributed to a scoping review project funded by the National Institutes of Health on veterans' suicide.
* Conducted comprehensive screening and evaluation of relevant literature.
* Participated in annotation training to enhance data categorization and analysis skills.
* Performed detailed literature annotation to support the research study's objectives.

**PUC-Rio LabINS -** Rio de Janeiro, Brazil Jan 2023 – April 2025

***Research assistant*** –*Dr. Jaqueline de Carvalho Rodrigues*

* Researching the psychosomatic aspects of stress, chronic diseases and chronic pain within vulnerable population.
* Exploring coping strategies and resilience on Fibromyalgia and Rheumatoid Arthritis patients.
* Aim to enrich comprehension of the intricate interplay between the mind and body within the context of chronic conditions and chronic pain particularly within diverse sociocultural settings.
* Investigate the impact of positive emotions on stress and chronic disease symptoms.
* Explore emotions contributions to destructive behaviors in chronic conditions.
* Utilizing individual quantitative method to explore the influence of stress, anxiety, sleep problems, mental health, coping mechanisms, and various psychosocial variables on the immune system, pain, and overall well-being.
* Leading a team of 3 interns.

***Undergraduate Research Assistant*** *– Dr. Carlos Eduardo Brito*Jan 2014 – Dec 2015

* Senior research: Conducted an extensive literature review to enhance comprehension of psychological aspects in patients with autoimmune diseases and chronic pain.
* Authored a 20 pages work exploring psychosomatic aspects related to autoimmune diseases and chronic pain.

***Undergraduate Research Assistant*** –*Dr. Juliane Callegaro Borsa* Jan 2013 – Dec 2015

* Gather indicators of stress, depression, and anxiety, and assess characteristics of resilience, psychological well-being, mental health, and self-care related to the health of public emergency service users.
* Aim to evaluate the extent to which the psychological variables vary in relation to gender and age.
* Quantitative and qualitative interviews with children, youth, adults and elderly.

***Undergraduate Research Assistant*** *– Dr. J. Landeira-Fernandez*Jan 2011 – Dec 2013

* Experimental psychology research on behavioral studies involving rats from the Carioca lineage.
* Ensured ethical and proper care of laboratory animals, including handling procedures, monitoring environmental conditions, and ensuring animal welfare.
* Conducted experimental procedures, collected behavioral and biochemical data, utilizing specific techniques to evaluate responses to stressors and related behaviors.

**TEACHING**

**Virginia Commonwelth University -** Richmond Aug 2025 – Present

***Teaching Assistant***

* Classes: Principles Learning & Cognition
* Grading assignments and exams, offering feedback to students
* Providing one-on-one or small group tutoring for students needing extra support

**Pontifical Catholic University -** Rio de Janeiro, Brazil Mar 2023 – Dec 2023

***Teaching Assistant***

* Classes: Qualitative method and Developmental Psychology
* Assisting in classroom instruction
* Collaborating with the lead instructor to align course objectives, content, and teaching strategies
* Providing one-on-one or small group tutoring for students needing extra support
* Grading assignments and exams, offering feedback to students
* Preparing teaching materials
* Leading group discussions to deepen understanding
* Managing attendance records

**PRESENTATIONS**

**Castro, S**, Castelar-Pinheiro, G.R. & Rodrigues, J. (2024) *Correlations Between Blood Biomarkers, Chronic Pain, and Perception of Mental Health in Adults with Rheumatoid Arthritis: A Cross-Sectional Study in Brazil.* – Poster presented at the 2024 Brain Conference Rio de Janeiro. *In Portuguese.*

**Castro, S**, Castelar-Pinheiro, G.R. & Rodrigues, J. (2024) *Relationship between pain, fatigue, and mental health in adults diagnosed with rheumatoid arthritis* – Poster presented at the 2024 Cindor Conference São Paulo. *In Portuguese.*

**Castro, S** & Rodrigues, J. (2024) *The Relationship Between Coping and Quality of Life in Fibromyalgia Patients.* – Poster presented at the 2024 Congresso paulista de dor Conference São Paulo. *In Portuguese.*

**Castro, S** & Rodrigues, J. (2023) *Quality of Life and Coping Strategies in Patients with Fibromyalgia.* – Poster presented at the 2023 Brain Conference Florianópolis. *In Portuguese.*

**Castro, S** & Rodrigues, J. (2023) *Multidisciplinary Intervention in Autism Spectrum Disorder.* – Poster presented at the 2023 IBNequinho Conference Rio de Janeiro. *In Portuguese.*

**Castro, S** & Rodrigues, J. Fibromyalgia: Exploration of Primary Coping Strategies. – Poster presented at the 2023 FesBE Conference Armação dos Búzios. *In Portuguese.*

**PUBLICATIONS**

**Castro, S.**, Carvalho, L. M., & Rodrigues, J. C. (2023). Quality of life and coping strategies of fibromyalgia patients [Electronic poster]. *Dementia & Neuropsychologia Journal*, [ISSN online 2764-4863]. (In Portuguese).

**Castro, S.,** Carvalho, L., & Rodrigues, J. Perception of quality of life, mood symptoms, coping strategies, and treatment in adults with fibromyalgia. *Psychology Notebooks Journal*. (In Portuguese). doi: 10.9788/CP2024.3-11

**MANUSCRIPTS UNDER REVIEW/IN PREPARATION**

**Castro, S.**, Castelar-Pinheiro, G.R. & Rodrigues, J. (R&R). The relation between clinical characteristics and mental health in patients with Rheumatoid Arthritis. doi:10.21203/rs.3.rs-6924681/v1

**Castro, S.**, Castelar-Pinheiro, G.R. & Rodrigues, J. (under review). Relationship Between Symptoms of Anxiety, Psychosomatic, and Coping in Adults with Rheumatoid Arthritis.

**INVITED TALKS AND WORKSHOPS**

**Castro, S**. Stress and Chronic Pain. (Nov 2023) – INCog Conference Rio de Janeiro

**Castro, S**. Neuropsychology, Psychosomatic, and Chronic Pain. (Oct 2023) – IBNec Conference Rio de Janeiro,

Rodrigues, J.; **Castro, S**.; Martins, G. (June 2023) *Risk and Protective Factors in Child Neurodevelopment.* – Ibenequinho Conference Rio de Janeiro, 2023. (Workshop)

**AWARDS**

* Young Scientist Award – Brain, Behavior, and Emotions International Conference (2023)

**CLINICAL**

**Clínica Médica E Psicológica -** Rio de Janeiro, Brazil Jan 2016 – Aug 2025

***Clinical Psychologist***

* Provide individualized psychotherapy, utilizing Existential Psychotherapy, Cognitive Behavioral Therapy and Positive Psychology.
* Implement therapeutic interventions to address a range of mental health issues, including anxiety, depression, trauma, and interpersonal difficulties.
* Mindful based interventions to sleep problems, chronic stress, pain and chronic conditions.
* Collaborate with over 100 clients over the years to establish treatment goals and develop personalized treatment plans tailored to their unique needs.
* Responsible for supervising the psychology team.

***Psychologist Lecturer***  Jan 2016 – Present

* Proficient in engaging public speaking across diverse settings.
* Integrates research and evidence-based practices to offer practical insights and solutions.

**CERTIFICATIONS/LICENSES**

* CITI Information Privacy Security Health Privacy (HIPAA)
* CITI Social/Behavioral Research with Human Subjects

**SKILLS**

* **Language:** English (Fluent), French (Basic), Spanish (Basic), Portuguese (Native).

**ADDITIONAL TRAINING/COURSEWORK**

* Grão Psicologia. (2020). *Anxiety in the COVID-19 pandemic* [Training course, 8 hours]. Grão Psicologia, Brazil.
* Grão Psicologia. (2020). *Fear, anxiety, and anguish* [Training course, 92 hours]. Grão Psicologia, Brazil.
* Grão Psicologia. (2017). *Positive and systemic psychology applied to couples and families* [Training course, 92 hours]. Grão Psicologia, Brazil.
* Grão Psicologia. (2017). *Positive psychology* [Training course, 92 hours]. Grão Psicologia, Brazil.
* California Lutheran University. (2017). *ELS – Intensive English* [Intensive English program, 2,014 hours]. California Lutheran University, United States.