

Name: **Dr. Sasha N. Cervantes, Ph.D.**

Institutional affiliation: **Governors State University**

Area of specialization: **Cognitive Psychology**

[Website](#)



Brief (1 paragraph) summary of professional interests:

I first found my home in the Midwest while earning my PhD in cognitive psychology and neurobiology from the University of Chicago. Now, I am an Associate Professor at Governors State University, a teaching-focused Minority and Hispanic Serving Institution (MSI/HSI), that enrolls more than 40% first-generation students. My research investigates memory accuracy and false memory, normal cognitive aging processes, creativity, the scholarship of teaching and learning, as well as student co-curricular engagement and belonging. Being a Mexican American, first-generation college student has shaped a lot of my co-curricular and professional choices. My service roles emphasize diversity and inclusion in the academy at the student and faculty levels, and advocating for fair representation and support for my colleagues. I leverage my advisory roles, including research in my lab, to increase student engagement, promote student growth and belonging, improve first-generation and underrepresented student graduation rates, and post-graduation outcomes. I would love the opportunity to bring this same passion for diversity and inclusion to further support the directives of MPA. I would like to continue the growth we have made in welcoming new voices and connecting all of the incredible scholars we are privileged to have in the Midwestern region!

Representative publications (no more than five):

Moinolmolki, N., Dutta, R., Mize, J.L., R., Ramos-Nunez, A., Cervantes, S.N., & Searight, H.R. (Eds.). (under contract – expected 2026). *Helping First-Generation College Students Succeed: Psychology-Backed Strategies for Campus and Classroom*. American Psychological Association.

Cervantes, S.N. (2019). Actively using online discussion in introductory psychology courses. In S. Baker (Ed.) *Teaching Tips: A Compendium of Conference Presentations on Teaching, 2017-18*. <http://teachpsych.org/ebooks/>

Cervantes, S.N. & Robey, P.A. (2018). Aligning reality therapy and choice theory psychology with cognitive psychology. *International Journal of Choice Theory and Reality Therapy*, 38(1), 13-20.

McDonough, I.M., Cervantes, S.N., Gray, S.J., & Gallo, D.A. (2014). Memory's aging echo: Age-related decline in neural reactivation of perceptual details during recollection. *NeuroImage*, 98, 346-358. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.neuroimage.2014.05.012>.

Representative honors or awards (no more than five):

2021-22 Intellectual Life Grant: Promoting DEI in Course Syllabi

2021-22 Florence L. Denmark Faculty Advisor Award
2019-22 Psi Chi Faculty Research Grant
2013-14 Frederick Douglass Postdoctoral Fellowship
2012-13 Starkey Duncan Award for Excellence in Undergraduate Teaching

Involvement in MPA:

For more than 15 years, I have been a member of the Midwestern Psychological Association (MPA), presented talks, moderated sessions, and reviewed abstracts for the Psi Chi sessions at MPA. I have also sponsored and escorted students to attend, including the Psi Chi poster sessions, panels, and featured speakers. I strongly encourage all of my students to take advantage of having a fantastic professional conference held locally, even if they can only attend for a day, to experience the exchanging of ideas and network with people who share their interests and goals from across the region. For the last couple of years, I have participated in an annual meetup at the conference for LatinX members. And since 2018, I have served as a Local Representative for MPA, promoting and encouraging my students and colleagues' involvement in the conference.